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JANUARY 2, 2023 ₹150

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EMINENT EXPERTS SELECT THE FINEST OF 75 YEARS OF INDEPENDENCE IN DIVERSE FIELDS

RNI NO. 28587/75 REGISTERED NO. DL(ND)-11/6068/2018-20; U(C)-88/2018-20; FARIDABAD/05/2020-22 LICENSED TO POST WITHOUT PREPAYMENT

Volume 48-Number 1; Published on every Friday of Advance Week. Posted at LPC Delhi — RMS — Delhi — 110006 on Every Friday & Saturday; Total number of Pages 314 (including cover pages)

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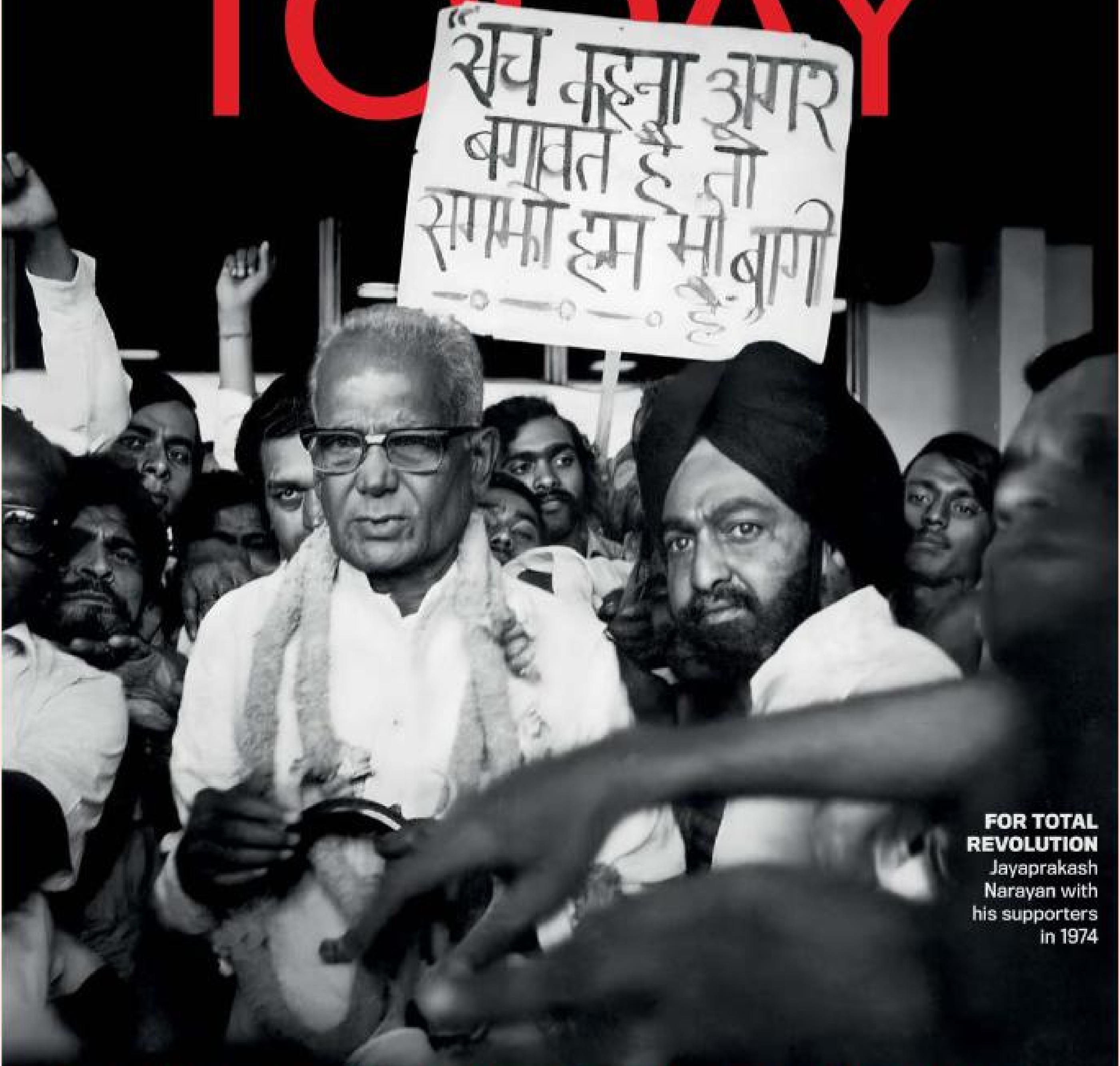
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Jayaprakash Narayan with his supporters in 1974

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EMPIRE BUILDER J.R.D. Tata, former chairman of Tata Group and a doyen of Indian industry, photographed in 1990

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TRAGEDY QUEEN
Meena Kumari, one of Hindi cinema's incandescent beauties, in a 1960 photograph

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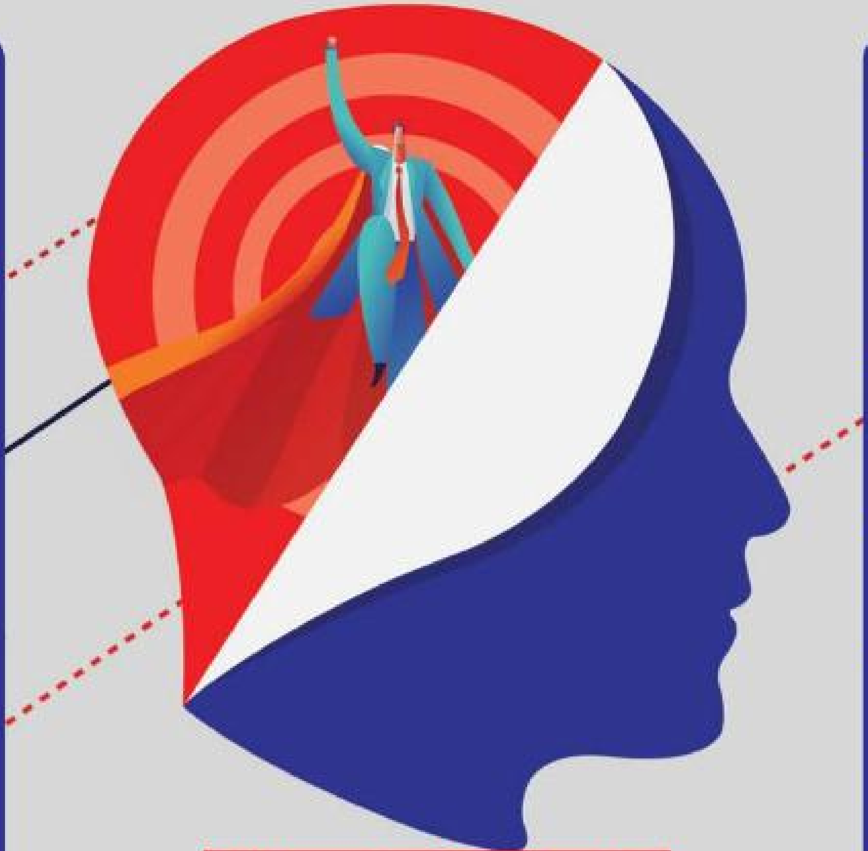

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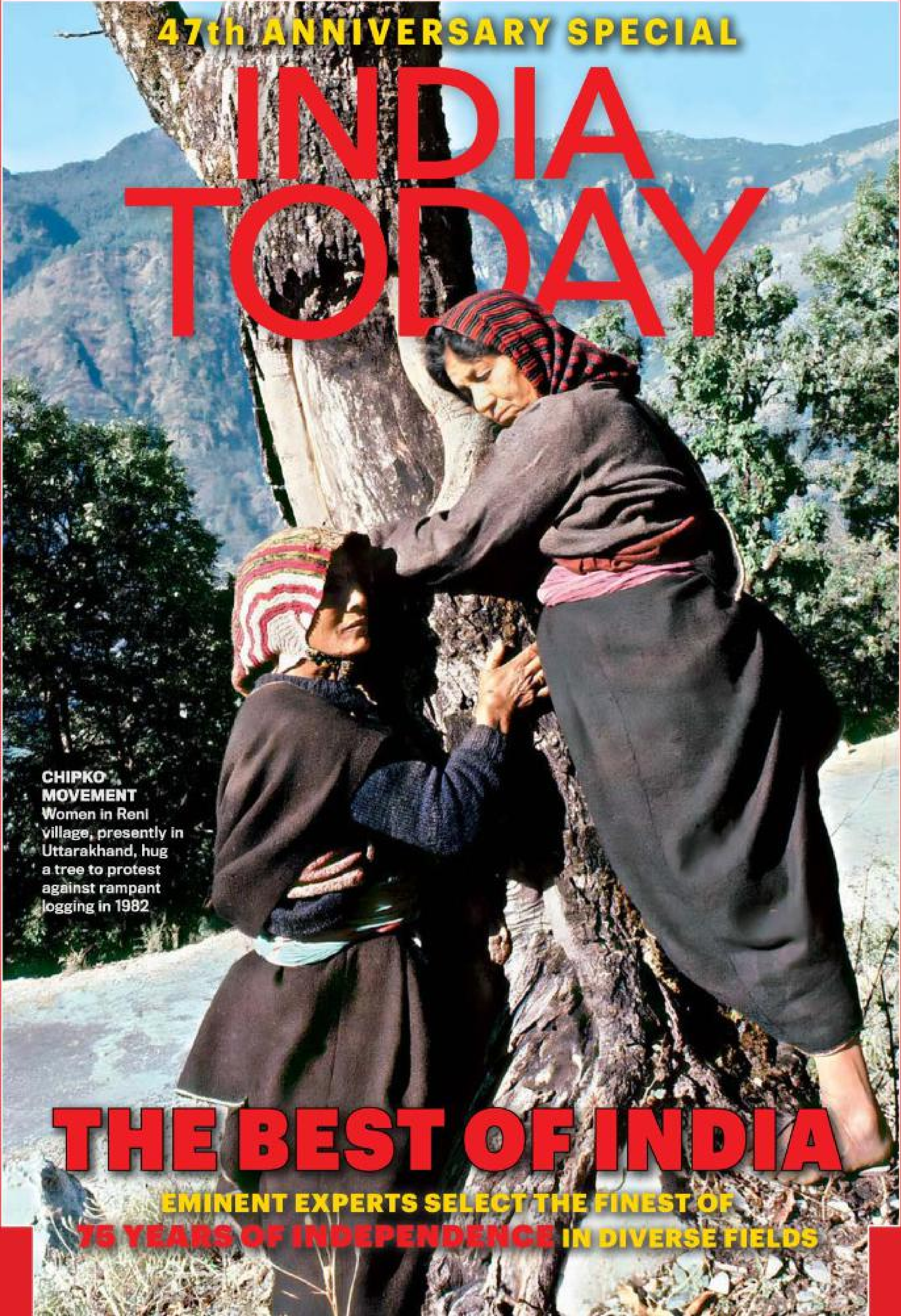

CHIPKO MOVEMENT
Women in Reni village, presently in Uttarakhand, hug a tree to protest against rampant logging in 1982

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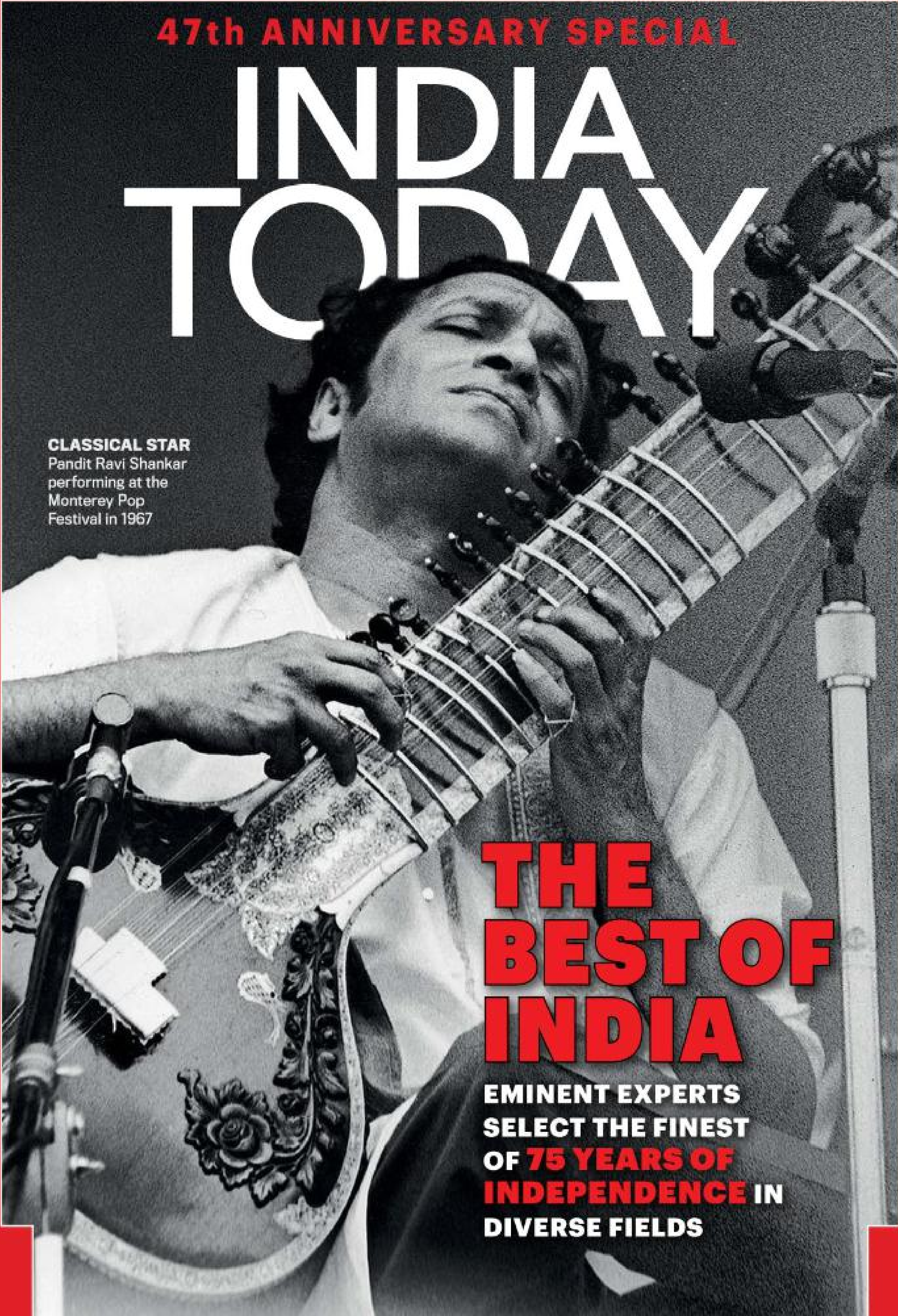

CLASSICAL STAR Pandit Ravi Shankar performing at the Monterey Pop Festival in 1967

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RURAL REACH
A woman at Malpura village, near Beawar town in Rajasthan, being given a Covid vaccine shot in 2021

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Volume 48-Number 1; For the week
Dec 27, 2022-Jan 2, 2023, published on every Friday

• Editorial/Corporate Office Living Media India Ltd., India Today Group Mediaplex, FC-8, Sector-16A, Film City, Noida - 201301, Phone: 0120-4807100
• Subscriptions: For assistance contact Customer Care India Today Group, C-9, Sector-10, Noida (UP)-201301, Phones: Toll-free number: 1800 1800 100 (from BSNL/MTNL lines), (95120) 2479900 from Delhi and Faridabad, (0120) 2479900 from Rest of India (Monday-Friday, 10 a.m.-6 p.m.), Fax: (0120) 4078080, Mumbai: 022-66063411/3412, Kolkata: 033-40525327, Chennai: 044-24303200, e-mail: wecare@intoday.com
• Sales: Direct all trade enquiries to General Manager (Sales), Living Media India Limited, C-9, Sector-10, Noida-201301 (UP)
• Regd. Office: F-26, First Floor, Connaught Place, New Delhi-110001.
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Printed and published by Manoj Sharma on behalf of Living Media India Limited. Printed at Thomson Press India Limited, 18-35 Milestone, Delhi Mathura Road, Faridabad-121007, (Haryana) and at Rajhans Enterprises, 134, Industrial Town, 4th Main Road, Rajajinagar, Bengaluru-560044, (Karnataka).
Published at F-26, First Floor, Connaught Place, New Delhi-110001.
Editor: Raj Chengappa.
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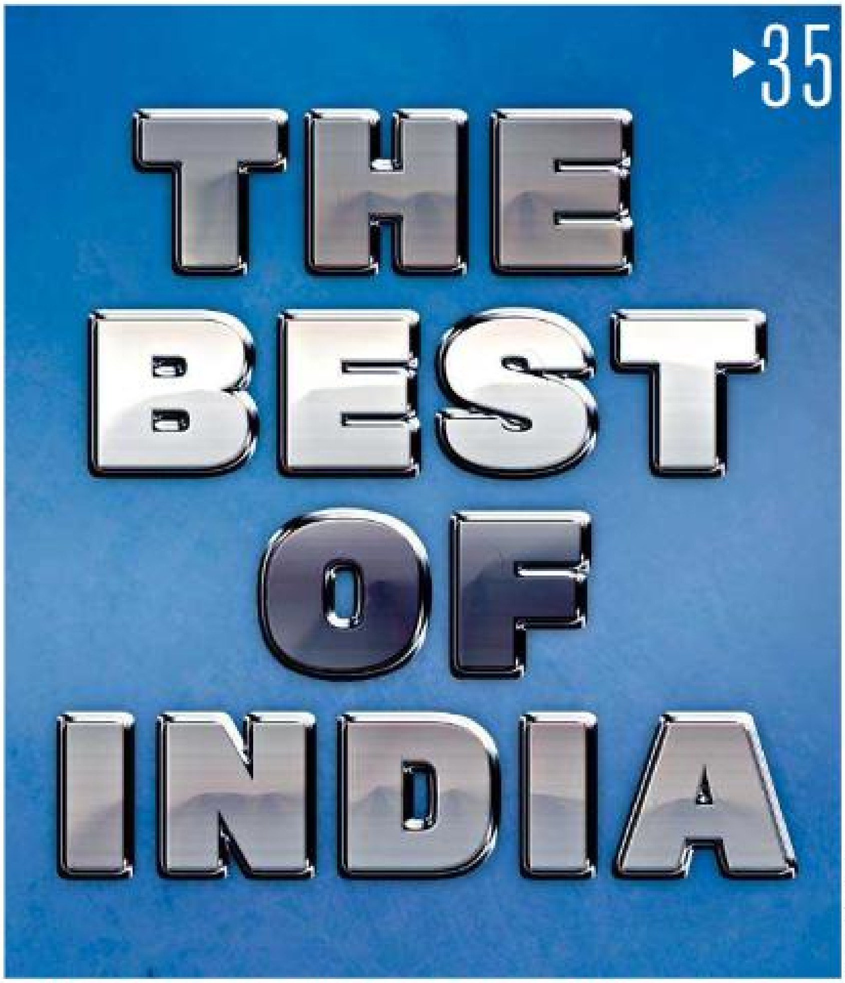

NILANJAN DAS

EMINENT EXPERTS SELECT THE FINEST IN DIVERSE FIELDS IN THE PAST 75 YEARS SINCE INDEPENDENCE

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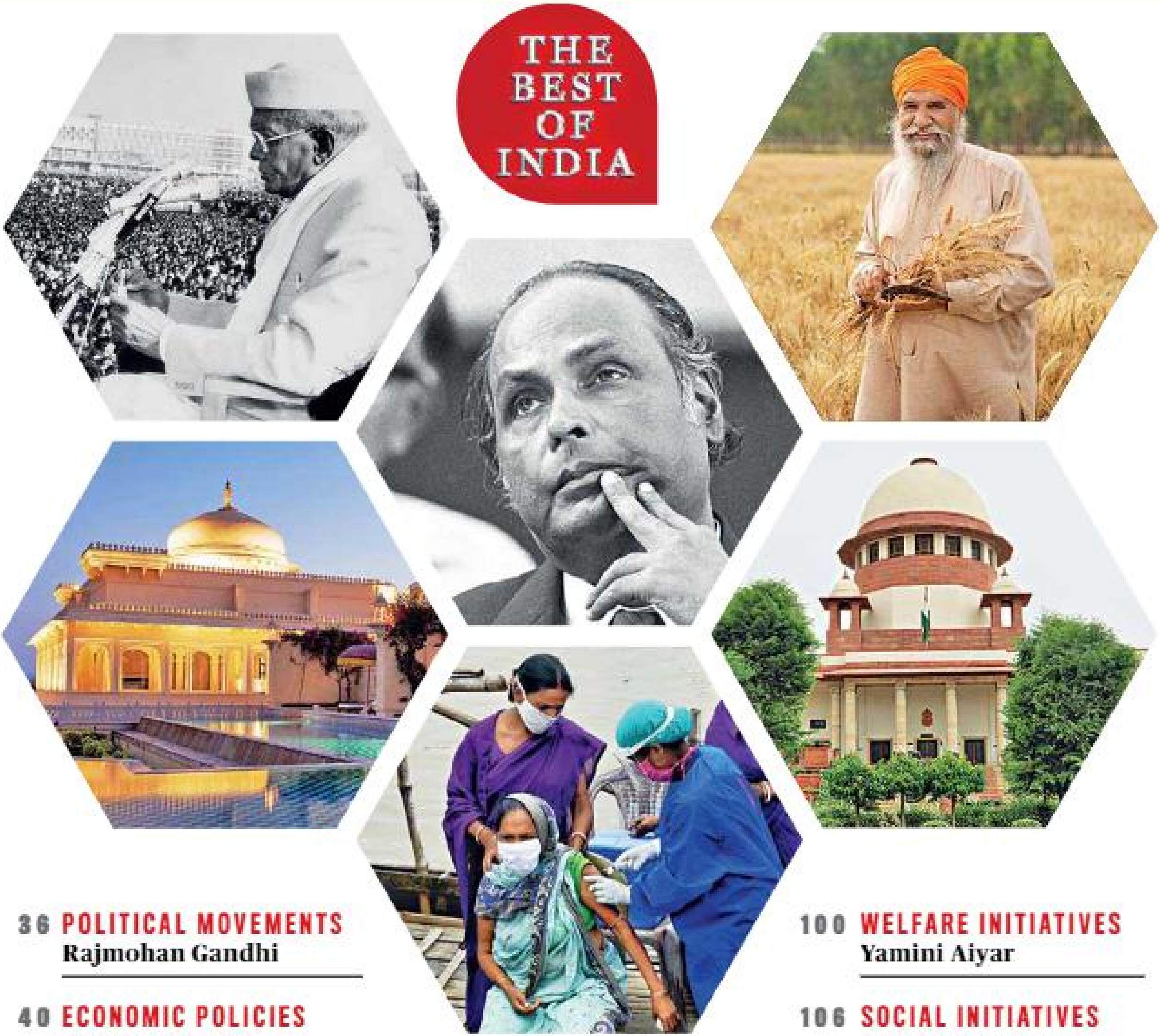

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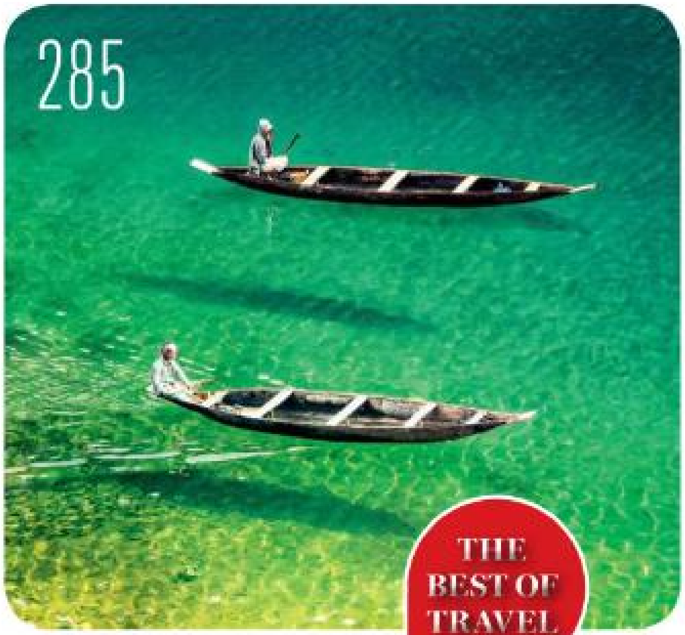
Jan 2023



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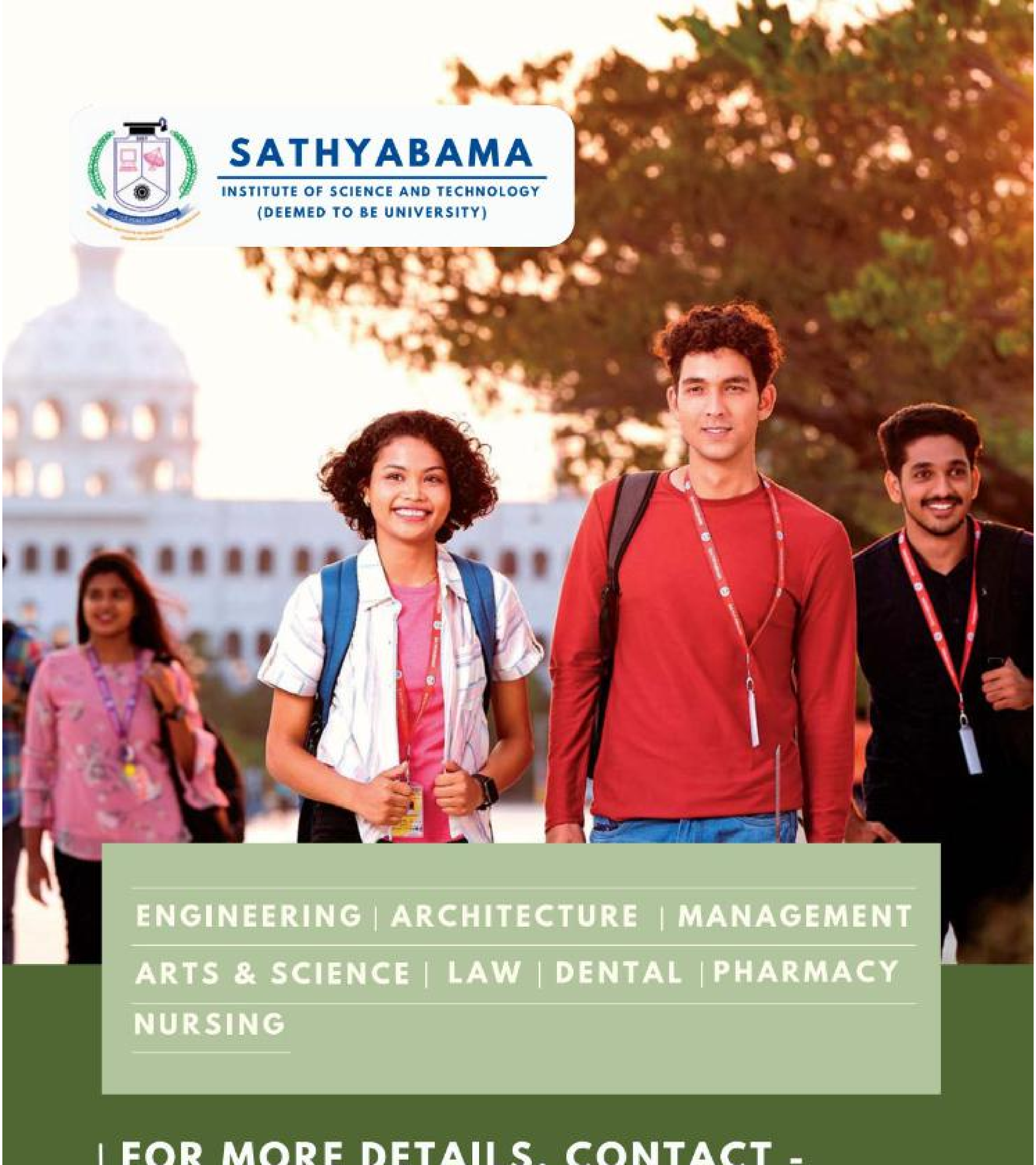

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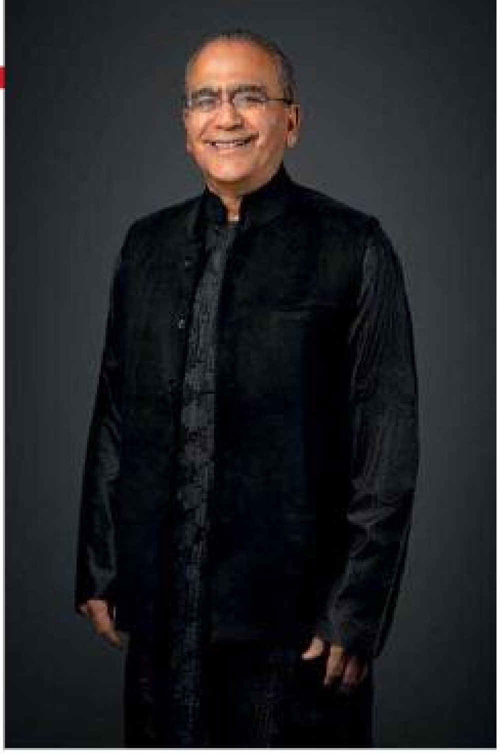


FROM THE
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

'The best' is a difficult concept to master. If you ask a parent, "Which of your children is the best?", it really can have no answer. But a striving for excellence is what defines us—each of us tries to be the best we can become and then better that. In a nation's journey, this continual quest to create a better tomorrow becomes its primary life-force. And this process cannot unfold without us reviewing the best of the past, which has shaped our present. India, as an independent nation, has turned 75 this year. As a tribute to this milestone, INDIA TODAY has chosen on its 47th anniversary to do a special issue to celebrate this immense journey with a retrospective gallery of the events and the personalities who have made this country what it is today.

THE BEST OF INDIA

How does one capture the entire life of a nation in the rearview mirror? How can you accumulate all the infinite moments of accomplishments that over a billion people have marked and then choose between them? In a real sense, it's impossible to quantify greatness. What we have taken recourse to, therefore, is only an approximation. But one underpinned by a certain logic: whatever events, moments or projects we zeroed in on, they have touched the lives of many. This is easy to understand, say, with a Bhakra Nangal Dam, or the high-yielding variety of seeds that ushered in the Green Revolution, freeing the country from endemic want and giving us self-sufficiency in food. Or with the Mid-Day Meal Scheme that benefitted millions of children, or a famous battle victory like the Kargil war that ensured intrusions by the Pakistan army on the LoC were rebuffed. But this criterion can be applied even if a 'best moment' arises within the mysterious ambit of an individual's psychology. A Dilip Kumar, for instance, cut so deep into himself in his search for an inner Devdas that it famously affected his real life. But what he gave us was a truly collective moment. Meena Kumari's ethereal loneliness belongs to us, as does Shammi Kapoor's infectious joy.

With this governing principle in mind, we sought to analyse India's passage through the decades within 34 broad categories. Many of them have to do with the State or the evolution of our polity in the most general terms. Thus, political movements make the cut, as do economic policies and landmarks in infrastructure or breakthrough initiatives in health and welfare. Since India as a nation-state is defined by its adherence to the Constitution, one of the most progressive documents of its kind in the world, we have similarly found our judicial history to be an indispensable part of it—landmark judgments that extended freedoms for everybody thus feature on these pages. So do the decisive battles India has fought, securing our freedom on another front, and the diplomatic successes we have achieved in peacetime, extending our esteem in the world.

Outside of the affairs of the State, though, there are domains vital to our existence. Breakthroughs and innovations in science and its applications affect us all; environmental initiatives address some of the most universal aspects of life; and architecture, especially when seen through the lens of sustainability, creates the physical world we inhabit. From the general to the more specific, think of business persons and how their genius and worldview impact us. J.R.D. Tata, for instance, cannot be understood without doffing our hats at the creative ways he has given to society with the institutions—and even a city—that he has built. The glorious attainments of the world of sport, again, spring from the level of the individual athlete or player to create a sense of collective joy. From Milkha Singh in 1960 to Kapil's Devils in 1983 to Neeraj Chopra in 2020, they have all crafted truly national moments.

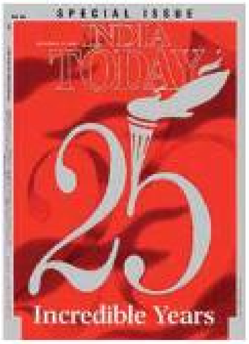
In the arts and culture world, we had to make a difficult categorial omission—especially with cinema and television. How do we talk of the best films without, inevitably, invoking a Ray or an Adoor? How do we account for the vastness of regional cinema or television, with the millions of subjective opinions it evokes? Here, we decided to restrict our choice to Hindi cinema purely because it is the one that is the most travelled one on the map and the one that most Indians enjoy. Then we further subdivided it into its constituent parts—thus, we have separate lists for the best films, directors, actors, actresses, songs and film albums. Similarly, with TV, universality is the criterion.

But the richness of the vast non-Hindi parts of the Indian universe filters through in other realms. In literature, for instance, we scan not only Indian writing in English and the best novels in Hindi but also take a substantial look at regional literature. Art is its own language, of course. The masters of the canvas are duly represented. As are the best plays, regardless of language, and the finest of the classical dancers and musicians who have ennobled our cultural lives.

Selections are bound to be subjective, and we did not wish for our opinions to cloud the act of choosing. Therefore, to select the best, we invited the best. We enlisted domain experts in each category who could adjudicate on their fields with unquestionable authority. Thus, we have eminences like Raghunath Mashelkar, Rajmohan Gandhi, Ashok Gulati, Gita Piramal, T.C.A. Raghavan and Lt Gen. Deependra Singh Hooda gracing these pages. Sunita Narain, India's foremost name in environmental studies, crafts savants Laila Tyabji and Jaya Jaitly, sociologist Amita Baviskar, architect Habeeb Khan, writers Jerry Pinto and Alok Rai, anthropologist G.N. Devy, art curator Giles Tillotson, dance historian Ashish Mohan Khokar, legal scholar Gautam Bhatia, TV producer Amit Khanna, and illustrious names from the world of cinema and writing associated with it—like Varun Grover, Nasreen Munni Kabir, Khalid Mohamed, Rajeev Masand—and many others bring their unique insights into this edition. "Impossible" is a word that kept recurring as a motif in their introductory passages as they set about to make a shortlist of the "best" and the inevitable omissions assailed them. But what each of these 34 experts has given us, and you, the reader, is collectively nothing short of an almanac of our nation. A few others curate the best of Indian experiences, whether in travel, food or hospitality.

We dedicate this issue with gratitude to those who have made this great nation what it is.

(Aroon Purie)



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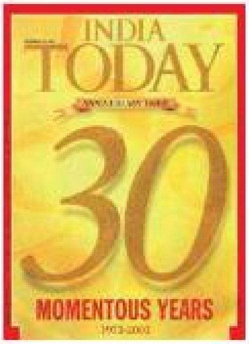

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INDIA TODAY
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“WeCatalysts”

“Catalyst”, is someone who can be described as the one to precipitate change. In a world which is transforming daily at a rapid pace and in multiple ways, the role of a Catalyst in business and society cannot be emphasised more. The entire WeSchool ecosystem is built to nurture catalysts equipped to bring about this transformation.

Three things that describe the soul of the ecosystem at WeSchool are the 3 T's which eventually build T Shaped professionals – those with the depth of business sector understanding and the vision of the width covered through various functions such as marketing, finance, human resources, operations, consulting among others.

Thinking – the Design Way, a non-linear, iterative process that teams use to understand users, challenge assumptions, redefine problems and create innovative solutions to prototype and test.

Technology – in Application, the body that transforms ideas to reality and provides possibility of scale and increased impact.

Triple Bottom Line – Acting responsibly as citizens and leaders, the mindfulness that requires focus on social and environmental issues as much as on profits. (Planet, People and Profits). The triple bottom line concept has today morphed into the use of 'environmental, social and governance' factors, or ESG, which now forms the bedrock of most sustainable investing processes.

#SIH Software Edition
GRAND FINALE 2022
25th to 26th August
SMART INDIA HACKATHON 2022
Health

Thinking – the Design Way: Publications like Forbes and Harvard Business Review have repeatedly emphasized the necessity of adapting design thinking to gain a competitive advantage. Design thinking builds the capacity to problem solve creatively. The process is focused on developing people, and teaches skills that can lead to increased innovation within an organization. Global organizations such as Google actively use Design Thinking as part of building its Innovation culture. More and more Indian Leaders and organizations are advocating the design thinking approach as an integral catalyst to innovation and growth.

WeSchool pioneered bringing in Design Thinking as an integral part of Management Education. WeSchool launched the full-time program PGDM Business Design program in 2007. However, besides the program, the bigger inclusion was including the Design thinking approach across all its programs, and the student learning and engagement approach WeSchool first immersed its faculty into learning Design Thinking from leading organizations across the globe known for Design thinking and Innovation. This included, IDEO, a Leading Global Design & Innovation Firm Transforming Businesses to learn the design thinking approach to problem solving and building businesses. WeSchool also worked with the Stanford Design School on projects in Rural India and used tools such as ethnographic studies as part of the research process used when studying people and new geographies for business solutions. This resulted in Design Thinking becoming an integral problem-solving tool that students use hands-on through live projects and practical application.

WeSchool has also set up INNOWE, an Innovation Lab with Design Thinking led Innovation at its core. A unique concept in itself, Innowe is where students from various backgrounds work and interact with interdisciplinary teams on innovative ideas and assignments that evolve into prototypes of scalable Business Plans. All the 6 key aspects of Design thinking empathize, define, ideate, prototype, test, and implement are applied practically when solving real-time challenges shared by Industry or in Society. As an outcome, WeSchool students eventually work in Strategic roles across organizations such as Mahindra & Mahindra, Accenture, IBM, Morgan Stanley, Capgemini among several others and roles that involve integrative and sustainable thinking.

Technology – in Application, the body that transforms ideas to reality and provides possibility of scale and increased impact.

We continually hear about new technical developments whirling across sectors and introducing changes at a pace faster than expected. While there is a fear of minimal human intervention, there is also an anticipation of faster and accurate work through automation. In today's competitive work environment, organizations are looking for ways to increase their productivity and so many of them are considering new technologies to embed into their business processes and products. Technology is changing not only the way a company does business but also the way people are valued by a company. There are two types of professionals, experts who have a complete knowledge of tech and the others who are evangelists. A Management student is expected to be both, a person with expert knowledge and being able to see where and how technology becomes the catalyst, as well as becoming an evangelist, making technology and processes using technology more inclusive.

WeSchool chooses to look at technology as an Art and Science and teaches the Science of it through programs. Having pioneered the PGDM E-Business program in 2002, WeSchool has over the decade evangelised technology in business – its appreciation, and application, in a way that it helps makes ideas come to life and builds speed, depth and scale. While the Institute's PGDM E-Business, PGDM Research and Business Analytics provide the students strong pillars of understanding new age technology, Data Analysis capabilities, the PGDM Programs in Retail, Healthcare, Media & Entertainment, Rural Management provide for understanding how technology can make an impact across sectors and be manifested to become growth catalysts.

Needless to say, that WeSchool's Technology- In application approach has realised leaders and catalysts viz Mr Shailaz Nag, Founder and CEO Dot Pe, Founder, Phone U. Industry, across sectors be it Healthcare, IT companies, FMCG's, Banking and Financial Institutions, Retail organizations have recruited WeSchool students in roles such as Business Analysts, Customer Success and Technology Catalyst roles.

A LIVING LAB FOR INNOVATION TO SOLVE BIG PROBLEMS IN CONTEXT: Setup in 2015, 'REDX WeSchool' is an Innovation Lab at S. P. Mandali's Prin. L. N. Welingkar Institute of Management Development and Research (WeSchool), is a vibrant ecosystem of Innovation, rolling out new and innovative commercial and citizen-based technologies to create a framework that supports wide-ranging needs of urban populations and corporations. We strive to go beyond known boundaries and disciplines of technology innovation for social impact.

The focus is to leverage:

- Imaging and digital technologies, ultra low-cost hardware, mobile platforms and Internet of Things,
- Design skills like Design Thinking, Design Research, Design ethnography, concept prototyping, Design validation, Localisation, Authentic design and Brand Storytelling
- Artificial Intelligence, Deep Learning, Machine Learning and Computer Vision to develop tech-enabled innovations

we4tech is an internal tech hackathon that is conducted every year for the incoming batch of students right into their first three weeks on campus. Tech tutorials are organized for students from both tech and non-tech backgrounds to help them create tech-based solutions for various business/societal challenges.

We undertake various initiatives within the campus to embed the spirit of tech-led innovation. Eminent experts from various fields share their views with our students. As a result of these initiative, the Institution's Innovation Council (IICs) has consistently scored 4+ star ratings nationally.

Triple Bottom Line – Acting responsibly as citizens and leaders, the mindfulness that requires focus on social and environmental issues as much as on profits. (Planet, People and Profits). The triple bottom line concept has today morphed into the use of 'environmental, social and governance' factors, or ESG, which now forms the bedrock of most sustainable investing processes.

At WeSchool, sustainable businesses, contribution to society and planet impact are built in through learning by doing models such as "grassroot immersion programs in rural India, healthcare sector", the "Global Citizen Leadership program (GCL) delivered across programs. WeSchool built the Global Citizen leader (GCL) program, collaboratively with the Center for Creative Leadership, a global training organization that provides leadership training that is human-centered and transformational. The GCL is an immersive program that every student at WeSchool participates in. The program involves solving real-time challenges, discovering future opportunities for businesses through products, services and uncovering new market spaces. Every year over 150 Live Industry projects are part of this program. This approach of teaching was also recognised for the impact it is making with the students in the Stanford Social Innovation Review as an initiative that is capable of Educating a New Generation of Entrepreneurial Leaders and the National HRD Network, in India.

According to Naukri, the list of the most in-demand and trending tech skills that will offer you a successful career:

- Data Science
- Cloud Computing
- Artificial Intelligence
- DevOps
- Blockchain
- RPA (Robotic Process Automation)
- Augmented Reality (AR) and Virtual Reality (VR)
- Cybersecurity

Times today require an integrative thinker to combine Technology + Domain Knowledge (Functional and Domain) + Sustainable solutions. All these initiatives require an amalgamation of Leadership, Design Thinking, and Innovation in action, with multi-stakeholder perspective and sustainable solutions.

"The WeSchool ecosystem is designed to create in-depth understanding of sectors and domains and provide exposure to a breath of functions viz marketing, finance, operations, human resources, analytics, technology and design thinking models that apply across businesses and economies viz Healthcare, Retail, Rural markets, Media and Entertainment.

The philosophy is four-fold duty. First, start with the nation, then society, the organisation and then your family, including yourself. We cannot leave everything to the government; the responsibility to do something lies with each of us. We need to be Catalysts to the change we want to see."

Prof Dr Uday Salunkhe, Group Director, WeSchool (Mumbai and Bengaluru Campus)

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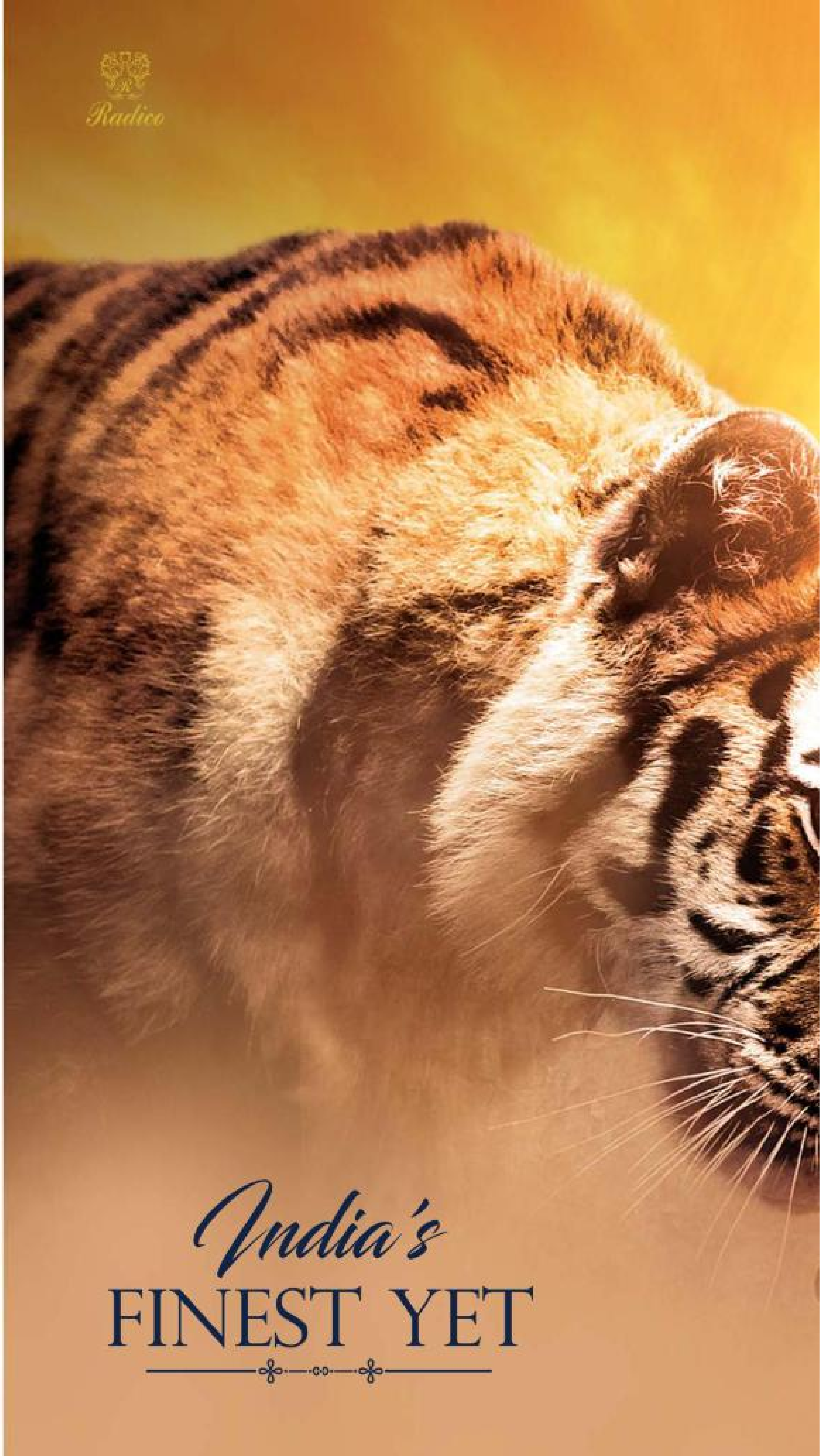
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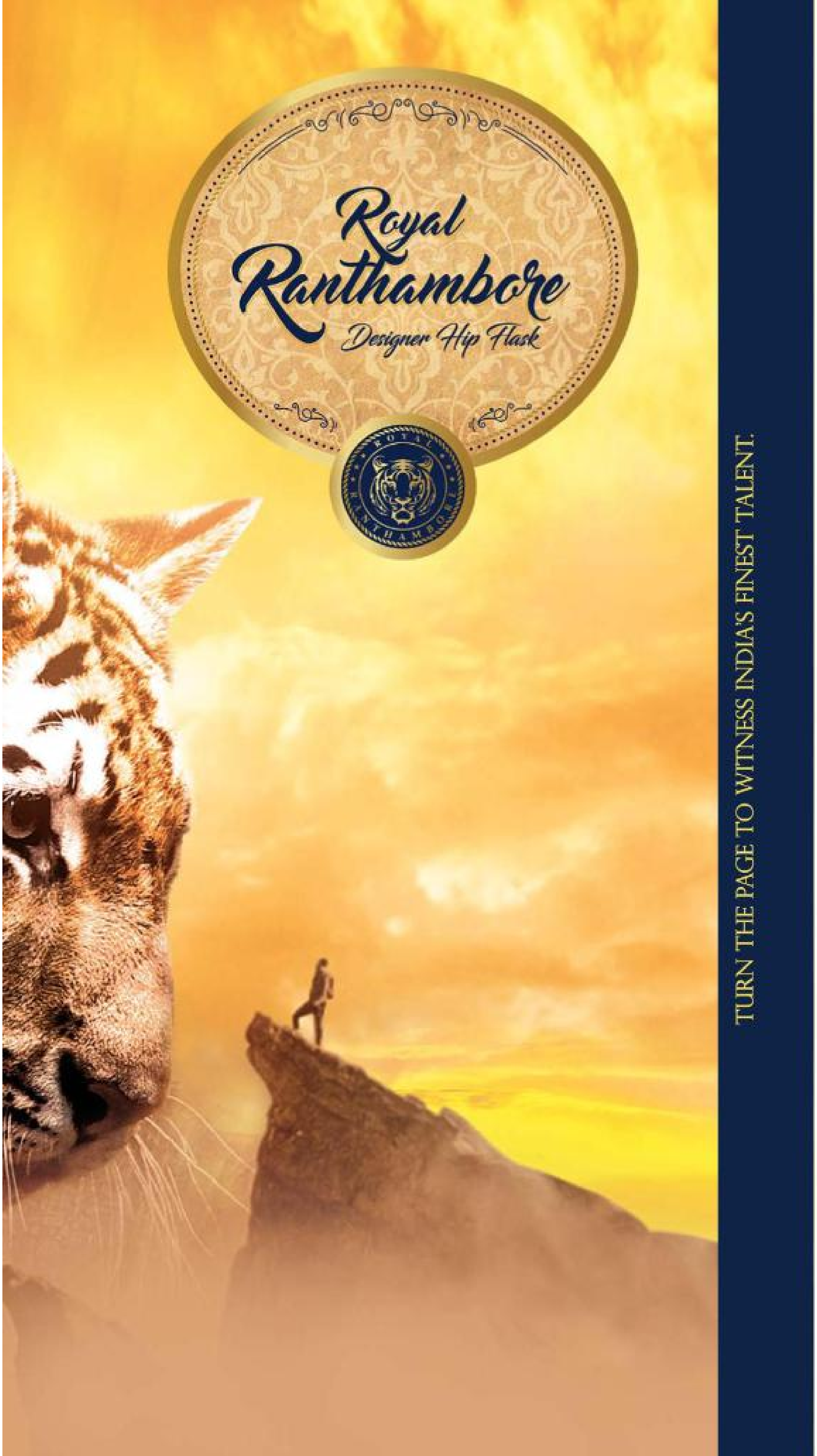
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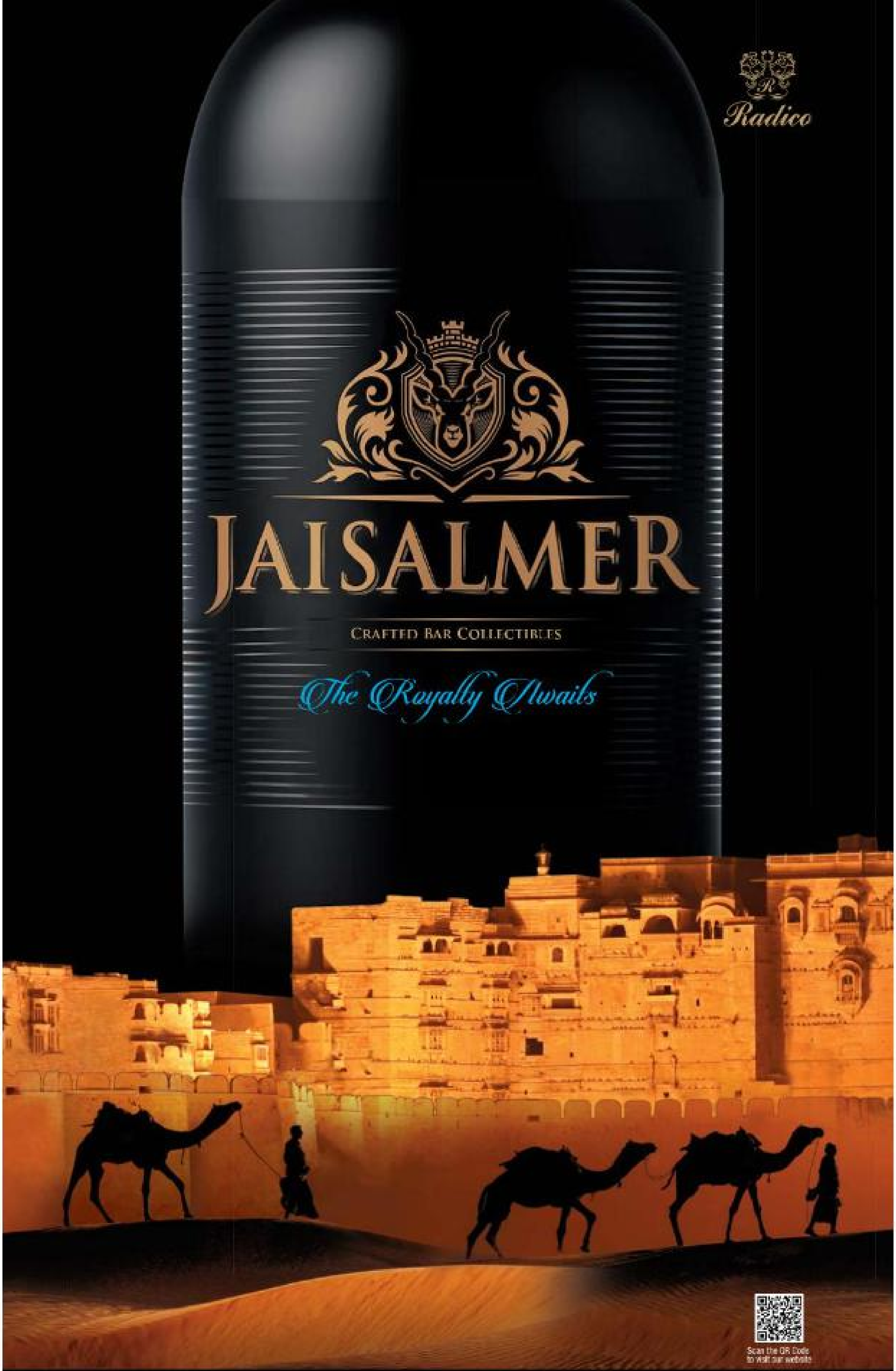
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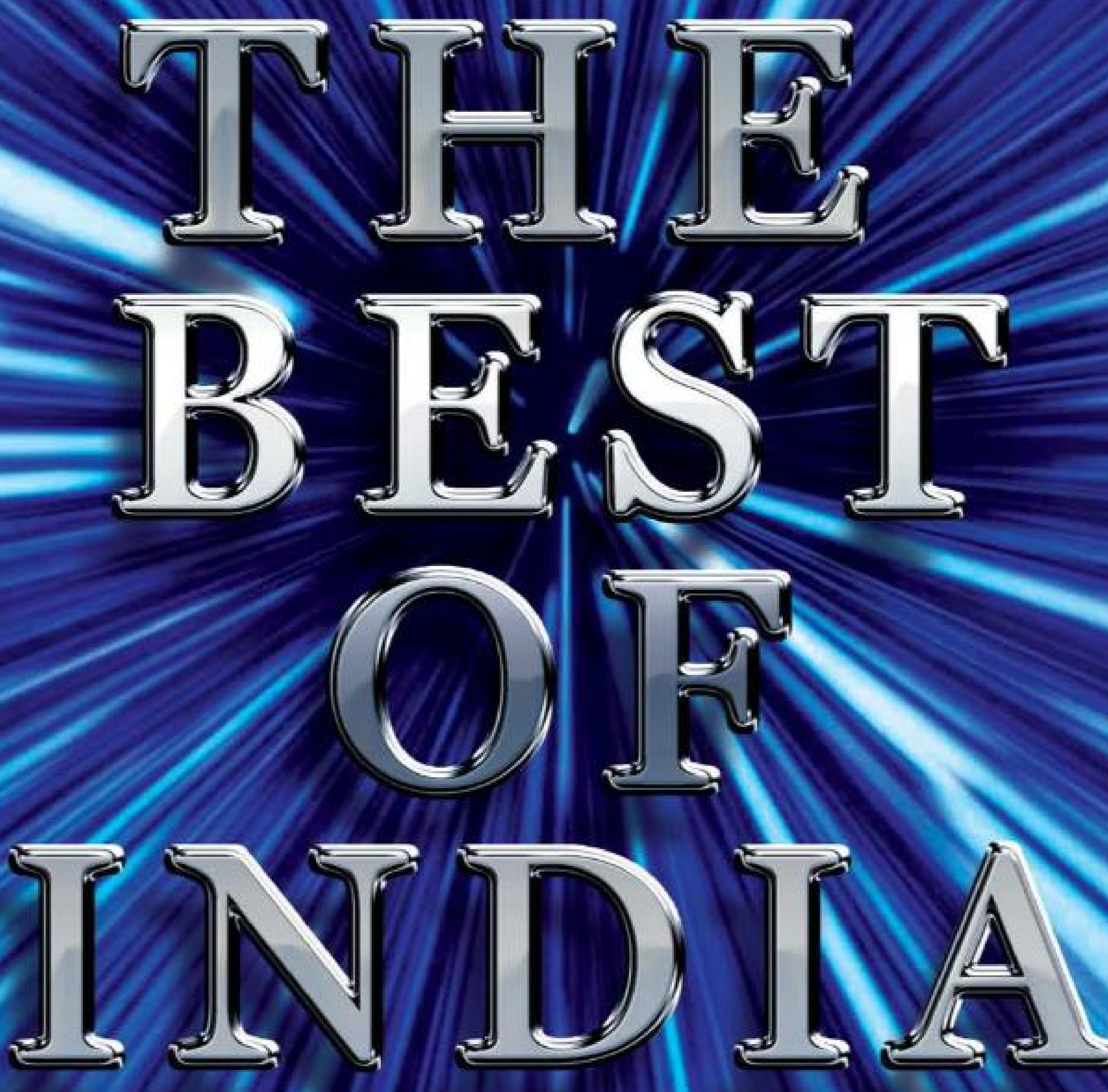


THE BEST OF INDIA

A celebration of the very many things our country has got right in its independent existence and the many famous Indians who made our lives happier, healthier, more prosperous and just plain better along the way. From culture to agriculture, dams to Bollywood blockbusters, victories on the battlefield to the Olympic podium and much, much more. Here are some reasons to be cheerful about the past 75 years–and the years ahead

Illustratiion by NILANJAN DAS

By **RAJMOHAN GANDHI**

Author, political scientist, historian

The Power of Democracy

Moments of collective action—and sometimes individual courage—that changed the political landscape for the better

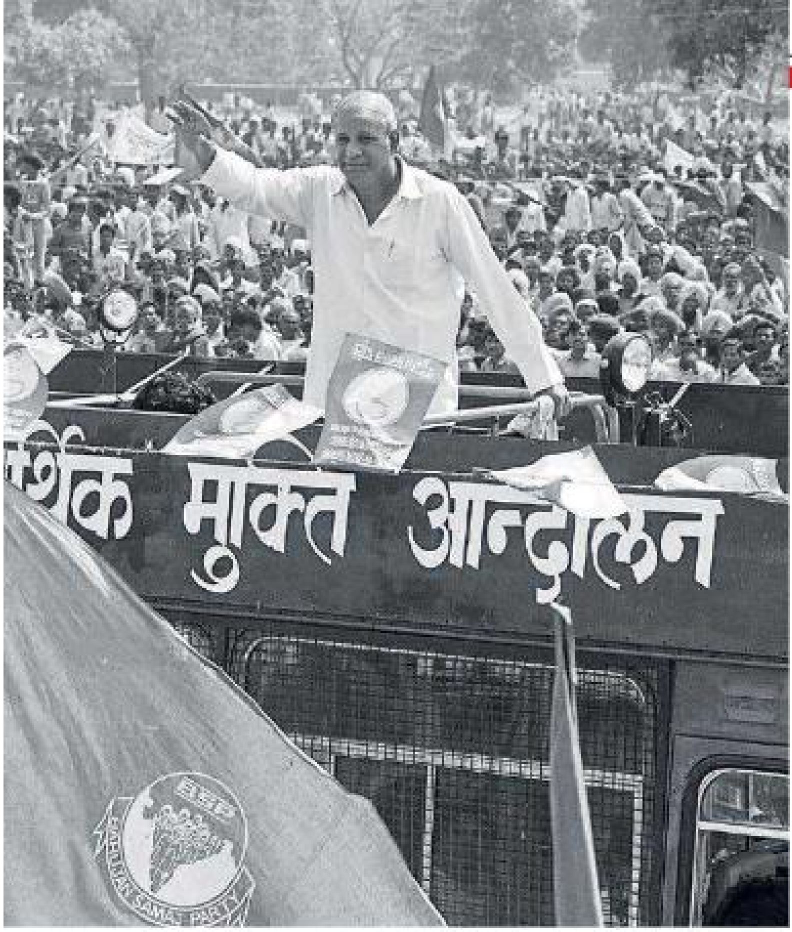
Linguistic Struggles

Linguistic states had been pledged by the Indian National Congress from 1917, yet it took **Potti Sriramulu**'s death from fasting in December 1952 for that promise to bear fruit. Born in Nellore into a trading-caste family, Sriramulu had embraced prison in the 1930s and 1940s as a *satyagrahi* and also campaigned for Dalit rights. After this loved figure fasted for 58 days and died, a separate state for the Telugu speakers of what was still a British-era Madras Presidency became unstoppable. Andhra emerged in 1953, and other internal boundaries too were fruitfully redrawn. Karnataka and Kerala appeared in the south, Maharashtra and Gujarat in the west, Punjab, Haryana and Himachal in the north. Citizens could now converse with officials in their own language!

Northeast Nationalism

Although the Northeast's ceaseless stirs for autonomy, which started along with India's Independence, have not been friction-free, the recovery of pride by the region's varied communities has been inspiring. Because of their struggles, the Assamese, Bodos, Garos, Khasis, Mizos, Meiteis, Nagas and Tripuris (to name but a few of the Northeast's ethnicities in alphabetical order) have stamped their intellectual gifts on the consciousness of countless people in India and the world.

SAIBAL DAS



SHARAD SAXENA

Dalit Rights

When in 1956 Dr Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar and lakhs of his Dalit followers repudiated the inferior status imposed on them for centuries and became Buddhists, indirectly affirming nonviolence, they performed a feat of noble defiance. It caused some to feel that the liberty, equality and fraternity enjoined in our Constitution might become the actual goals of Indian society. Picking up the social justice baton in the 1980s, **Kanshi Ram** attempted to create an 'invincible' alliance of Dalits, deprived non-Dalits and Muslims for ending social and economic oppression. The imagined alliance proved elusive, yet the social justice call personified by Dr Ambedkar, and pursued by Kanshi Ram and others, remains a powerful vision.

GETTY IMAGES

Bhoodan Movement

Begun in April 1951 in response to the needs of landless Dalits in a village in Nalgonda district in today's Telangana state, **Vinoba Bhave**'s Bhoodan or land-gift drive is thought to have resulted in donations by 1957 of around 4.5 million acres of land, a large proportion in Uttar Pradesh and Bihar. Although a few gifts were bogus, and some recipients faced difficulty registering donated land, the remarkable Bhoodan movement had social, economic, political and psychological ramifications. A belief entered minds that India's lands were meant for the needs of everyone.

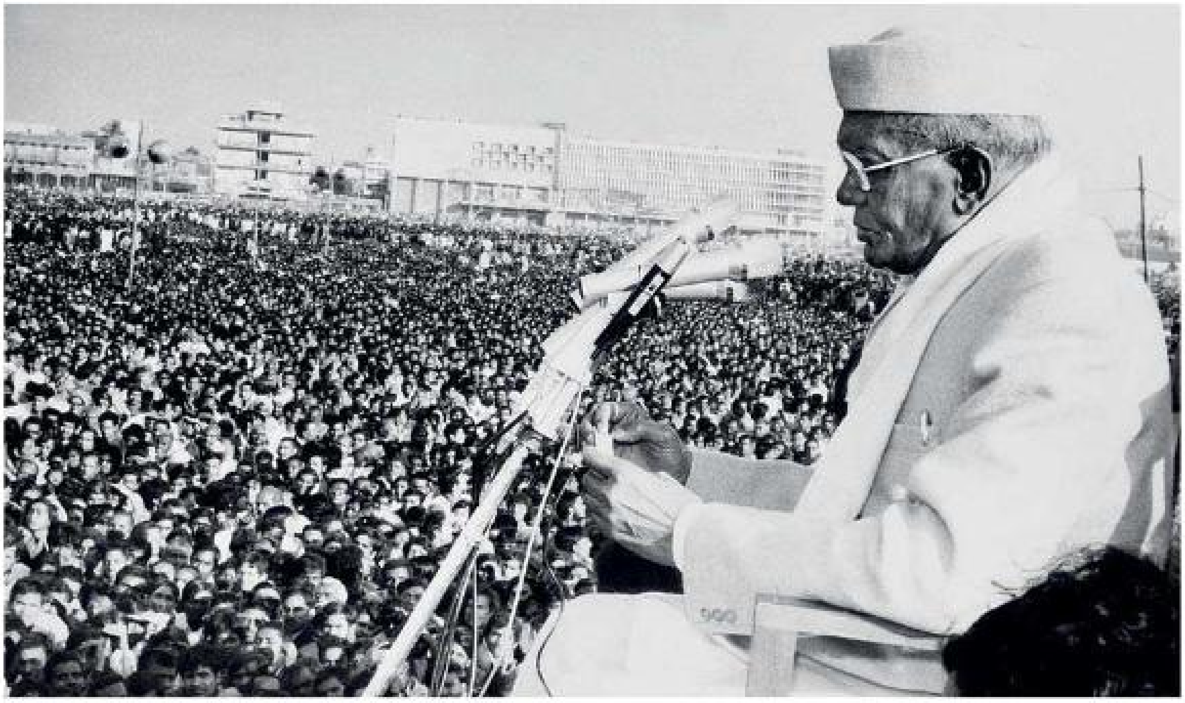
Liberalisation

Launched in 1959 by Chennai's C. Rajagopalachari, Mumbai's Minoo Masani, Andhra's N.G. Ranga and associates, the Swatantra Party raised a much-needed voice against 'the licence-permit raj', an unintended byproduct of independent India's anti-poverty and egalitarian policies. Over three decades later, in 1991, finance minister **Manmohan Singh**, backed by prime minister Narasimha Rao, began removing obstacles to enterprise placed by the State, and the Indian economy took off. The runway for that take-off was painstakingly laid by the earlier critics of the licence-permit raj.

SHARAD SAXENA

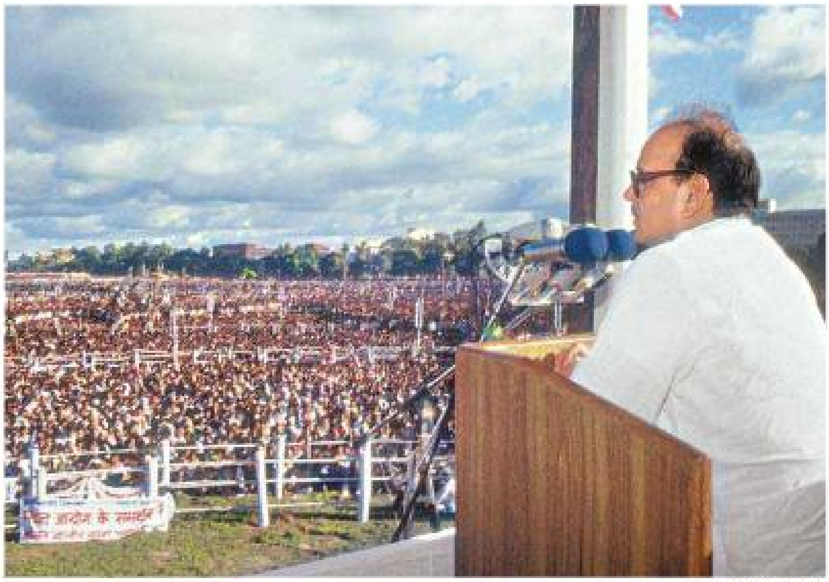
Sampoorna Kranti

The nationwide campaign for democratic rights that **Jayaprakash Narayan** led in 1974–77 seems in retrospect a natural corollary of his brilliant role in the 1942 Quit India movement and the disquiet he expressed when Mahatma Gandhi was assassinated in 1948. The Emergency Indira Gandhi was panicked into declaring was central to the 1970s' story, but JP's goal of 'total revolution' went far beyond defeating a political foe. That modern free India must aim simultaneously at individual liberty and equal rights for all Indians is the takeaway from the JP movement. Having drawn Indians of every stripe into a struggle for democratic rights, that movement remains, in 2022, a hope-giving memory.



Mandal Agitation

If history endowed power to India's high castes, and constitutionally-mandated reservations brought some relief to SC/ STs, that still left half the population uncared-for. It was Dr Ram Manohar Lohia who in the 1950s started a movement for the rights of the nation's neglected middle castes—the OBCs. And it was **V.P. Singh** who, by implementing in 1990 recommendations of the Mandal Commission, revealed the OBC's salience. After first fiercely opposing OBC quotas in colleges and government jobs, the Hindu right backed the new quotas in a bid to deploy OBCs for a divisive, anti-Muslim push.



KM KISHAN

RTI Movement

In 1994, thousands of Rajasthani villagers (galvanised by a handful of activists who had tossed away elite careers to live in the impoverished village of Devdungri in Rajsamand district) demanded information (along with bills and vouchers) about public works in their area, including the muster rolls listing worker attendance, wages due, wages paid, materials ordered and materials transported. Expectedly, this demand for an open *hisaab* was fiercely resisted, but the villagers' persistence, and the dedication of their activist friends such as **Aruna Roy**, produced the Freedom of Information Act in 2002 and the Right to Information Act in 2005, magnificent all-India feats launched from a little-known dusty patch in Rajasthan.

BANDEEP SINGH

Farmers' Protest

Enduring Covid, a hard winter, a blistering summer and calumnious propaganda, the victorious 378-day protest staged in 2020-21 on Delhi's borders by India's farmers against the Modi government's farm laws will be remembered for the solidarity offered from one tough month to the next by family members, neighbours and friends—and for the government's climbdown. Led by cultivators from Punjab and Haryana, the protest was backed by farmers across the land who felt the new laws had weakened them against big buyers. On November 19, 2021, Modi said the laws would be repealed; eight days later, they were.

By **SHANKKAR AIYAR**

Political-economy analyst and author

Unchaining India

India's journey from penury to prosperity has been a roller-coaster ride. These momentous decisions steered it past troughs and upheavals and helped to create a modern, global powerhouse

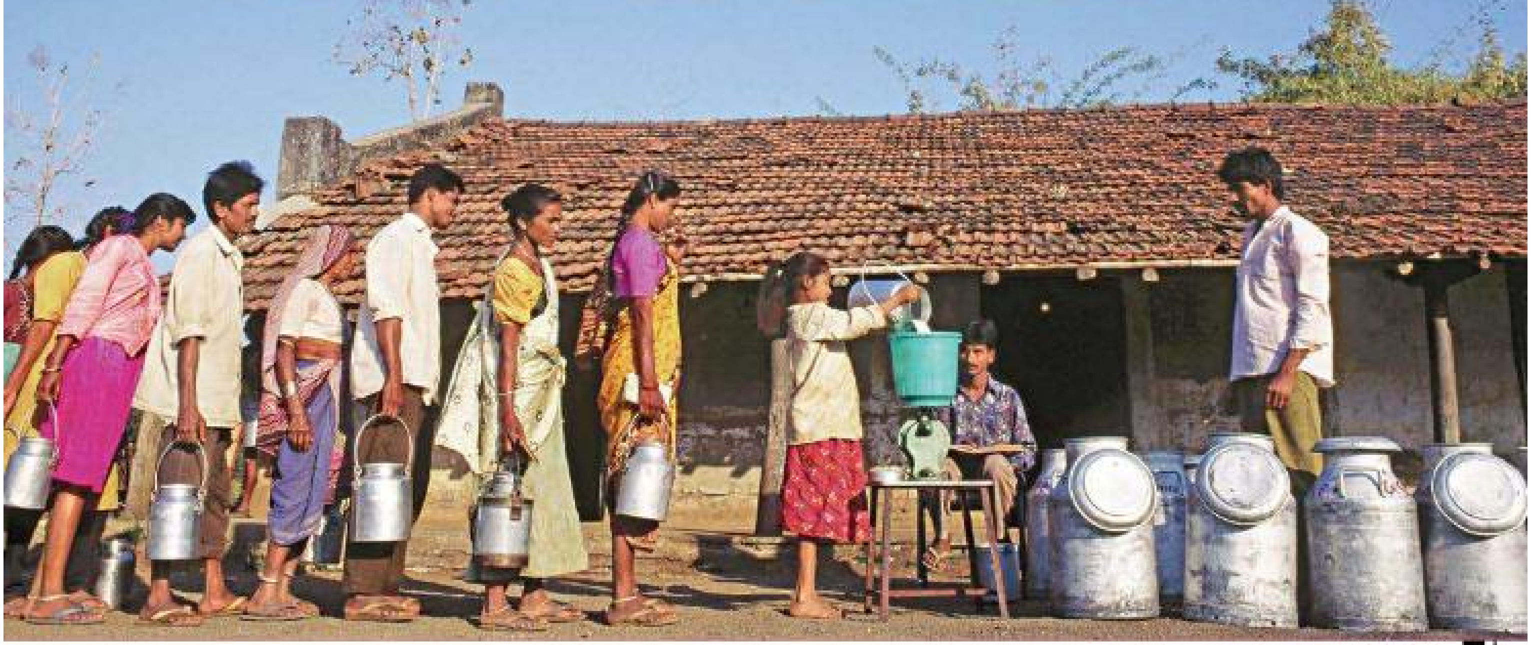
Food Security

In 1952, Jawaharlal Nehru had said "everything else can wait, not agriculture". Policy shortcomings and a rising population worsened scarcity, leaving India dependent on Harry Truman's India Emergency Food Act and PL480 assistance. In 1963, Nehru told Parliament: "We cannot live on doles from other countries." As it turned out, in 1966, as India was caught in two successive years of famine, the Lyndon B. Johnson government corralled supplies and tagged India a 'ship to mouth' economy. Lal Bahadur Shastri and Indira Gandhi empowered C. Subramaniam and M.S. Swaminathan to induct hybrid seeds to ramp up yield and engineer the Green Revolution. With a harvest of 316 MT in 2022, India is among the world's top three food producers.

RACHIT GOSWAMI

The Amul Model

In 1951, India produced 17 million tonnes of milk a year with per capita availability of 5 ounces daily. Scarcity—in milk, its products, baby food—remained real for decades and visible in the quantum of imports. Verghese Kurien, the milkman of India, had established the viability of milk cooperatives as early as in 1952. Even though every prime minister from Nehru to Indira Gandhi recognised the Kurien model, the idea could not get past systemic sloth. Kurien achieved a breakthrough only in 1969, when he leveraged the milk aid from FAO-WFP to fund the national grid for milk. His 'billion litre' idea catalysed Operation Flood, creating incomes for millions of rural households. Thanks to that Milk Revolution, India is counted as the world's largest producer of milk with an output of 210 MT. It creates an economic value larger than of cereals and pulses.



INDIA PICTURE

Bank Nationalisation

India knew in 1947 that it didn't have the resources to fund its ambitions. Its savings rate was barely 11 per cent. The political class was convinced that business houses had colonised savings. It was Subhadra Joshi who first articulated the idea of nationalisation. Coming at the intersection of economics and politics, it gathered subscription as India needed investment capital and Indira Gandhi needed political capital to dethrone the syndicate in the Congress. In July 1969, the ownership of 14 banks was transferred to the government, enabling it to access funds through the mechanism of SLR, addition of 50,000 branches and aggregation of funds. In 2022, the policy may trigger revulsion, but there's no denying its role in enabling development. There's no disputing either that it took 40 years and a 12-digit revolution for the country to see financial inclusion.

INDIA PICTURE

Mid-Day Meals

At Independence, India had a literate population of a mere 18.3 per cent. Poverty thwarted enrolment and perpetuated illiteracy. Victor Hugo had first evangelised the correlation between feeding children and enrolment. K. Kamaraj introduced the idea in 1955; MGR expanded it in Tamil Nadu in 1982. Soon, it caught on across states, and chief ministers campaigned for a national programme at the National Development Council through the '80s. In 1991, nearly a third of children didn't attend school, malnutrition was rising and India trailed even its neighbours, with literacy lagging at 52 per cent. Universalisation of the mid-day meal scheme (MDMS) came in phases, first in 1995 and after a Supreme Court intervention in 2001. Two decades later, several studies have validated the impact of MDMS, enrolment is in the 90s and girls outnumber boys in schools. Yet, a quarter of our population is still not literate.

PANJIAR PRASHANT

Economic Liberalisation

India won Independence in 1947, but it took the country another four decades to gain economic freedom. Inspired by the Soviet Union, India had chosen a model of state-led economic development—the government effectively determined the 'who, what, where and how much' of production and pricing. C. Rajagopalachari had memorably characterised the architecture as 'licence-permit raj'. Although evidence showed the model didn't deliver, successive regimes persisted with it. Change was compelled by the balance of payments crisis—India was left with barely a week's worth of foreign exchange. Chandra Shekhar approached the IMF. At 3 pm on January 18, 1991, the agency cleared emergency assistance, but the bailout came with conditionalities. India had to pledge gold from its reserves, seek aid from other nations and promise reforms. P.V. Narasimha Rao was sworn in on June 21. A day later, he addressed the nation and said: "There are no soft options left." On July 24, Manmohan Singh presented the budget, and Rao, as industries minister, dismantled the licence raj. Liberalisation had arrived.

Software Boom

In August 1963, after the war with China, Jawaharlal Nehru set up a committee under Homi J. Bhabha to examine India's competitiveness in technology. The committee discovered that India had an edge in hardware and software. Unfortunately, the country messed up the hardware opportunity and almost missed the software bus too. The software sector was denied the resources—computer connectivity and cash dollars—for three decades. In 1990, N. Vittal, secretary, Department of Electronics, floated the idea of software technology parks. He faced internal resistance and conditionality of $400 million in exports. Thanks to the 1991 crisis, the Rao regime eased policies to enable dollar earnings. The software sector, much like electronics did for Japan and Korea, helped brand India's technological prowess. Today, India's software firms employ over 5 million persons and set a new record with $254 billion in exports.

Gram Sadak Yojana

It started with a question: "Is there a way to connect India with Bharat?" A.B. Vajpayee asked it of Nitin Gadkari, who had come to felicitate the prime minister for winning the 1999 general election. The party, though, had lost in Maharashtra where Gadkari, as PWD minister, was known as *pulkari* or flyover maker. Vajpayee's concern: 300,000 villages and 300 million people lacking connectivity. Replying in the affirmative, Gadkari related the success of a fuel tax-funded road programme connecting Naxalite-affected districts in Maharashtra. Vajpayee asked Gadkari to head the National Rural Road Development Committee. Since its launch on December 25, 2000, over 7.12 lakh km of rural roads and 7,264 bridges have been completed. Its success has even moved the World Bank to commend its role in enabling transformation in governance.

CHANDRADEEP KUMAR

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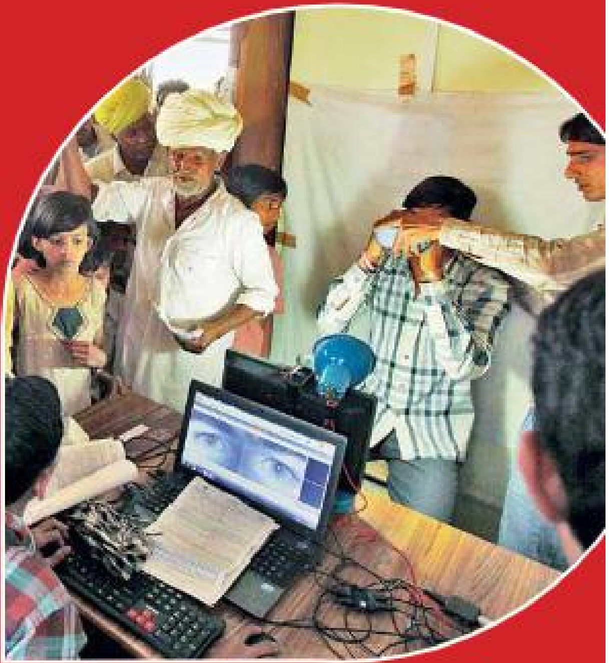
Aadhaar, the 12-Digit Revolution

For six decades, governments created programmes. Poverty persisted and the schemes expanded. Rajiv Gandhi famously said out of every rupee meant for welfare, "only 15 paise reached the people". The poor had no instrument to claim their rights. The idea of identity cards yo-yoed from regime to regime. In 2009, the UPA government inducted Nandan Nilekani to set up the Unique Identification Authority of India with an initial corpus of Rs 120 crore. Pranab Mukherjee provided political cover and Nilekani and then TRAI chairman R.S. Sharma powered the idea of biometric identity to create a platform for targeted delivery. The project faced public and political trial, and judicial scrutiny by the Supreme Court. BJP leaders called it a threat to the nation. Narendra Modi the candidate raised questions in the run-up to the 2014 polls. Prime Minister Modi, persuaded of its efficacy by Nilekani, adapted and adopted it. Legislative legitimacy followed, and the PM propelled its expansion. In 2022, over 1.3 billion people are enrolled. Aadhaar has enabled financial inclusion, easier access to welfare and private services and is lauded globally.



REUTERS

Goods and Services Tax

For years, India endured a regime of multi-layered taxation that impacted cost of living and business competitiveness—the current fuel taxation system symbolises the ills. The concept of a unified tax system—encompassing central, state and local levies—was visualised during the A.B. Vajpayee regime. Vijay Kelkar articulated it best in his 2004 report of the Task Force on Implementation of the FRBM Act as a 'grand bargain' to foster a 'national common market'. Announcements followed—by P. Chidambaram in 2006 and Pranab Mukherjee in 2011—but debates over calibration of rates and loss compensation to states haunted formulation. Eventually, Prime Minister Narendra Modi deployed political capital to negotiate a deal and operationalise a 'one nation, one tax' regime in 2017. In five years, the GST platform, initially marred by glitches, has evolved to deliver an average Rs 1.4 lakh crore a month. Critically, it has brought sanity to the tax system. Opening up GST data can inform and improve design of policy.

E-Payments

Few could have imagined its impact when the National Payments Corporation of India was set up in 2008. A 'not for profit' government initiative funded by banks, it has designed and furnished a parade of platforms—among them, a nationwide connected ATM network, IMPS for real-time transfers, RuPay cards and the Unified Payments Interface (UPI)—in under a decade. The ubiquitous scan and pay culture, with over 7 billion transactions in a month just on UPI, symbolises the expansion and adoption of digital payments. As Prime Minister Narendra Modi observed recently, digitalisation has enabled 'democratisation of technology' in the war against poverty. India today boasts a digital payments ecosystem that is the envy of the world.

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YASHODA SUPER SPECIALITY HOSPITALS

Providing Technologically Advanced Treatment with Human Touch

The Yashoda Group in its over 3 decades of existence has built a rich legacy in the Delhi NCR region. It is hailed for its super speciality treatment, complex surgeries, international expertise and state of art infrastructure. In this interview Yashoda Super Speciality Hospitals' director, Upasana Arora, sheds light on the group's journey and the current trends in the healthcare industry.

DR UPASANA ARORA
Director
Yashoda Super Speciality Hospitals

PLEASE TELL US ABOUT THE YASHODA GROUP.

Yashoda Hospitals started its operations in the 1990s. We commenced with a 100-bed hospital. The hospital group is named after my mother-in-law, Yashoda, who died of cancer. My husband resolved that he wouldn't let others undergo the sufferings that our family had to endure. We have a strong emotional connection with the hospital because we started it from scratch. In over 3 decades of our existence, we have managed to register constant growth.

PERSONALLY, HOW DO YOU REFLECT ON YOUR JOURNEY WITH THE YASHODA GROUP?

My initial journey wasn't easy since I didn't belong to a healthcare background. While others in the family all were medical professionals. So people had apprehensions about how I could contribute to the hospitals since I didn't have experience in the field. This was in early 2000. The use of computers was not very common. I advocated the use of the best that technology had to offer in the field. Earlier, oxygen would come in cylinders, I got tanks installed. Diesel would be stored in drums, I got underground pipes placed. Realising the importance of keeping oneself updated with the latest developments in the medical field I got a seminar hall constructed for the exchange of ideas. I worked arduously for earning NABH Accreditation for our hospitals. Over the decades I pursued multiple courses and focused on up-skilling myself.

PLEASE EXPLAIN IN DETAIL ABOUT YOUR MEDICITY PROJECT AND WHAT SETS IT APART.

Medicity is a dream that both my husband and I have nurtured for a while now. Yashoda group stands for quality healthcare at affordable prices. There is this perception that private hospitals are unaffordable for patients belonging to modest income backgrounds. But at our hospitals, the thrust has always been on serving patients from all income groups. We believe that everyone, regardless of their economic background, should be able to avail of technologically advanced medical treatment. Whether a person is seeking treatment for heart ailments, cancer or neurological issues, our endeavours are directed at providing the best possible line of treatment.

At Medicity, we have brought together some of the best brains in the medical fraternity under one roof. It also boasts cutting-edge medical facilities provided at affordable prices.

IN YOUR HOSPITALS, YOU ALSO TAKE CARE TO BUILD THE RIGHT AMBIENCE. WHAT ALL GOES INTO THAT?

Yes, we make a conscious effort in ensuring that people who visit our facilities do not feel that they are in a hospital. The idea is to provide the comfort of a home (away from home). Be it visual or sound aesthetics, the emphasis is on creating an ambience that is therapeutic in it itself. Every member of our team is committed to providing a soothing experience to those visiting us. You would hear 'Om Chantings' in our hospitals to reduce stress and build a relaxing environment. We also use fragrances to conceal the smell of the cleaning agents and create a fresh and inviting ambience. We use varied aromas such as sandalwood, camphor and jasmine. There are vibrant statues and paintings that we place on the walls and shelves. Additionally, we have a dedicated area for worship for the family members of the patients. You would find Gita, Quran, Guru Granth Sahib and Bible there.

We also strongly believe in the importance of imparting human touch to all that we do. To make sure that the people walking into our hospitals do not feel lost, there are coordinators stationed at various points in our hospitals. So whether the patient has to visit, OPD or IPD, there is guidance ready at hand. We prioritise building a strong connection between the patient and our team.

We have Hospital Infection Control (HIC) meetings every month. The average stay of a patient at our hospitals is between one and a half to two days. Our thrust is on the speedy recovery of the patients.

THE GROUP HAS BEEN AT THE FOREFRONT OF INTRODUCING PHARMACO AND MATERIOVIGILANCE IN INDIA. WHAT DOES IT ENTAIL?

Yashoda Group is the only one among the private hospitals to provide for Pharmaco and Materiovigilance in Uttar Pradesh. We collect data from other hospitals and various pharmacies to identify the drugs that are evoking adverse reactions on a large scale. The government then undertakes further research on that drug and on spotting issues bans the drug altogether. Being an authorised centre for Pharmaco and Materiovigilance, we are in the position to help the wider medical fraternity with our data.

YOU HAVE ALSO EMPHASIZED THE NEED FOR GIVING BACK TO SOCIETY. WHAT ARE THE CAUSES ESPOUSED BY YOU?

Both my husband and I are extremely grateful for the respect that society has given us. We are working to further the cause of women's education. We have

adopted a large number of girl children. We have taken the responsibility of providing for all their needs. We are also working to prevent the occurrence of anaemia among women.
Yashoda Group has adopted 5100 TB patients in Ghaziabad.

I am also associated with Special Olympics Bharat. It uses the vehicle of sports to transform the lives of children with intellectual disabilities.

One derives a lot of satisfaction by being of use to the deprived sections of society. In fact, through the medium of this interview, I would urge all those with the means to do their bit to make a difference in the lives of the underprivileged.

IN THE FIELD OF HEALTHCARE, PATIENTS' TRUST IS OF UTMOST SIGNIFICANCE. WHAT HOLDS THE KEY TO WINNING THAT CONFIDENCE?

There was a time when doctors were revered. The relationship was of mutual respect. But of late that has changed. There is now a trust deficit. I don't think any doctor deliberately tries to harm his patients. But it is important for medical professionals to maintain transparency. They should help the patient understand the exact nature of his situation so that the patient can make informed decisions. While imparting treatment it is also important to add human touch so that the patient and his family feel comfortable. Communication is of utmost importance in the field of healthcare. So we provide specialised training to our employees to prevent instances of communication gaps. Our patients are our brand ambassadors. We don't go out splurging on marketing ourselves, instead, we focus on winning the trust of our patients, who then recommend us to others.

AND YOUR EFFORTS HAVE RECEIVED RECOGNITION IN THE FORM OF VARIOUS AWARDS. WHICH ARE THE ONES PARTICULARLY GRATIFYING?

We are grateful to have received numerous awards and recognitions for our efforts. While our trophy cabinet is ever-expanding, I strongly feel that it is the letters that our patients leave for us that we are most grateful for.

DO YOU THINK THE PANDEMIC HAS BROUGHT ANY (MAJOR) CHANGES IN PEOPLE'S APPROACH TOWARDS HEALTHCARE?

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the nature of the virus required the patients to be kept in isolation. Staying away from their loved ones posed an emotional challenge for the patients and their kin. At most hospitals, even the doctors were reluctant to pay multiple visits to the COVID wards. But at our hospitals, our doctors and members of the nursing staff, remained actively involved in the treatment. They would regularly visit the patients and offer them assurance and emotional support, apart from the medical treatment. That really helped us earn a lot of great reviews.

An important lesson that the pandemic has taught is the unpredictability of life. Additionally, post-pandemic the cases of heart attacks too have increased massively. All that has made people more conscious about their health. They are no longer callous about their ailments and seek professional help for them.

WHAT CAN BE DONE TO MAKE PEOPLE MEDICALLY FURTHER AWARE SO THAT THEY CAN GET TIMELY TREATMENT?

There is an adage that states prevention is better than cure. People should get annual health checkups done. Also, there is a pressing need to make lifestyle changes. Most people, owing to their busy professional schedules, spend a large part of the day on chairs. Such a sedentary lifestyle is the root of various diseases. Health is wealth. If one is battling a life-threatening disease, everything around the patient comes to a standstill. So not giving due importance to health when one still has time, can be lethal.

Mental health is an area which is not given due attention. Most people battling mental health issues do not head for medical help. It is still taboo in our society. This is despite the increase in mental health problems post the pandemic. We constantly keep organising mental health awareness campaigns to make this concern a part of public discourse.

WHAT ARE THE FUTURE PLANS OF THE GROUP?

Prime Minister Narendra Modi has placed a lot of emphasis on medical tourism. Nearly 2 million patients visit India each year from 78 countries for medical, wellness and IVF treatments. We want to contribute further to provide a greater boost to this industry. We want to do our bit to help India gain recognition as the best destination for healthcare in the world.
Indian medical professionals are playing a key role in the growth of the healthcare industries in the UK & the US. So there is no dearth of Indian talent. We want to open our centres in foreign countries as well and showcase to the world the various technologically advanced & traditionally rich treatment methods of India.

YASHODA
Super Speciality Hospitals
EMERGENCY
AMBULANCE

By GITA PIRAMAL

Author and business historian

NAMAS BHOJANI

Business at the Summit

Pushing India's industrial growth needed visionaries with exceptional entrepreneurial zeal. Here are Top 10 pioneers who immensely contributed to the country's wealth creation

G.D. Birla *(1894-1983)*

Birla Group patriarch

Ghanshyam Das Birla, or GD as he's often referred to, was one of the architects of India's industrial growth. By the time GD was born, on April 5, 1894, the family was well established. Later, as a young man, he wanted to diversify the family business into manufacturing. GD left for Calcutta in Bengal Presidency and began independently as a jute broker. In 1918, he established Birla Jute Mills, and with an investment of Rs 50 lakh in 1919, the Birla Brothers Ltd was formed. In the 1940s, he ventured into the territory of cars and established Hindustan Motors. After Independence, Birla invested in tea and textiles through a series of acquisitions of erstwhile European companies. He also expanded and diversified into cement, chemicals, rayon and steel tubes. Although business always absorbed his mind, his heart was from the beginning captured by Mahatma Gandhi and India's freedom struggle.

J.R.D. Tata *(1904-1993)*

Former Chairman, Tata Sons

J.R.D. Tata was a nationalist as well as an internationalist at the same time. Apart from Air India and Tata Consultancy Services, JRD steered the group into new avenues that included Tata Motors, Titan Industries, Tata Tea and Voltas. From the 14 enterprises he inherited, JRD built an empire comprising 95 companies by the time he retired in 1988, taking the business of the Tata Group from $100 million when he took over to over $5 billion. Under his guidance as a trustee, the Sir Dorabji Tata Trust established Asia's first cancer hospital, the Tata Memorial Centre, in Bombay in 1941. JRD also founded the Tata Institute of Social Sciences, the Tata Institute of Fundamental Research and the National Centre for Performing Arts besides many other institutions.

RAGHU RAI

Dhirubhai Ambani *(1932-2002)*

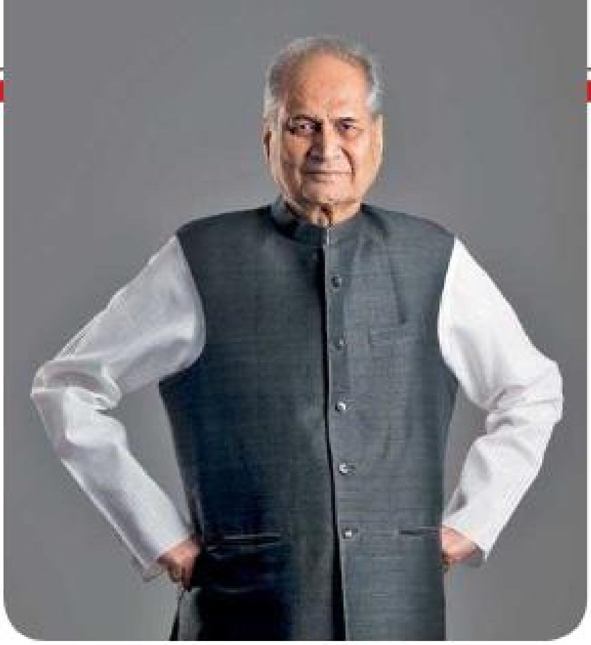
Founder, Reliance Industries

Dhirubhai Ambani was one of India's greatest wealth creators. Starting on a meagre seed capital, he went on to build a Rs 60,000 crore giant of a company over the next three and a half decades—an achievement that earned Reliance Industries Ltd a place on the global Fortune 500 list, the first-ever Indian private company to do so. Reliance is the largest producer of petrochemicals in the country and among the top 10 in the world, with the world's largest refinery off-gas cracker complex of 1.5 million tonnes per annum ethylene capacity at Jamnagar in Gujarat. Dhirubhai is widely regarded as the father of India's capital markets. In 1977, when Reliance Textile Industries Ltd first went public, the Indian stock market was a place patronised by a small club of elite investors who dabbled in a handful of stocks. However, Ambani managed to convince a large number of first-time retail investors to participate in the unfolding Reliance, promising them, in exchange for their trust, a substantial return on their investments. It was to be the start of one of the great stories of mutual respect and reciprocal gain in the Indian markets.

Kasturbhai Lalbhai *(1894-1980)*

Lalbhai Group patriarch

One of India's pioneering industrialists of the 20th century, Kasturbhai Lalbhai played an active role in public policy and the establishment of the Indian Institute of Management in Ahmedabad. Born to a business family of Nagarsheths in Jhaveriwad, Ahmedabad, Lalbhai quit his studies at an early age to look after the family business following his father's untimely death. He found his calling in the cotton mill industry and after working at the family's Raipur Mills, he founded several other mills, including Arvind Mills, in 1931. Lalbhai was elected to the Central Legislative Assembly in 1923 and participated in the Swadeshi movement of the 1930s. He was a signatory to the famous Bombay Plan of 1944 that laid a blueprint for economic development in independent India.



RACHIT GOSWAMI

Rahul Bajaj *(1938-2022)*

Former Chairman Emeritus, Bajaj Group

Rahul Bajaj was one of those few industrialists who had seen business thrive in an era of the so-called 'Licence Raj' with almost no competition from overseas players, as well as in an open economy post-1991. He started his journey with the Bajaj Group in 1965 at the age of 30, and became managing director in 1972 after the demise of his father, Kamalnayan Bajaj. The group was set up by his grandfather Jamnalal Bajaj, a close associate of Mahatma Gandhi, in 1926. Bajaj was known for his candour, and when he spoke up, policymakers took note. He championed local manufacturing and argued for a level playing field for the Indian industry in the post-liberalisation era. Under him, the Bajaj Group saw big diversifications into insurance, financial services and electrical products. Rahul Bajaj will perhaps be most remembered for the iconic Bajaj Chetak that was a runaway success for several years.

Adi Godrej, *80*

Former Chairman, Godrej Group

Adi Godrej, who started his leadership role in the group as a managing director of Godrej Soaps in 1963 at the age of 21, had himself become synonymous with the group. Founder Ardeshir Godrej failed in a few ventures before striking success with the locks business. Next came security equipment and steel furniture. From soaps, it moved to detergents and personal/ household products. Since vegetable oil was used to make soap, the byproduct, oil cake, was marketed as animal feed. With a large landholding in Vikhroli near Mumbai, the group also forayed into real estate. The Godrej Group enjoys the patronage of 1.1 billion consumers globally. Adi Godrej stepped down as Godrej group chairman in August 2021.

BANDEEP SINGH

GETTY IMAGES

N.R. Narayana Murthy, *76*

Co-founder & Former Chairman, Infosys

The son of a small-town school teacher from Karnataka, Murthy is globally recognised as a doyen of India's phenomenally successful IT industry. He ignited entrepreneurial dreams in millions by demonstrating that intellectual capital can help a middle-class Indian create a billion-dollar enterprise. Murthy conceived and implemented the business model responsible for the growth of Infosys and Indian IT at large. Infosys was the first Indian IT company to list on a US stock exchange, and is a leader in setting corporate governance benchmarks. While it created wealth, it was a pioneer in distributing it too, through employee stock options that have made over 30,000 of its employees millionaires.

Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav

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JAISON G

Azim Premji, *77*

Founder Chairman, Wipro

Azim Premji will be remembered for the transformation of a vegetable oil company into a consumer goods behemoth. He is also celebrated for the creation of India's largest computer company and second-largest software company—albeit a ranking that has been difficult to sustain. The innovations of Wipro's computer business included the launch of the world's first Multibus II computer, based on the Intel 286 chip, as well as the launch of the Wipro Supergenius personal computer, which became India's largest-selling PC. Premji's software foray charted a path for Indian IT companies to enter the engineering software sector. Wipro led the verticalisation of the computer software sector and the entry of Indian IT firms into the infrastructure support segment. Premji's leadership style was to select leaders he trusted and allow them to make their own decisions.

Kumar Mangalam Birla, *55*

Chairman, Aditya Birla Group

Kumar Mangalam Birla inherited the family business when he was just 28 after his father Aditya Vikram Birla died in 1995. Over the years he has been at the helm, he took the Aditya Birla Group from $2 billion to over $45 billion in revenues. Birla stands out as an exceptional business builder. In 2007, an opportunity arose to bid for the downstream assets of Canadian firm Novelis. Birla saw it as an opportunity to expand the group's global footprint. That decision changed the group's profile and put Hindalco, the group's non-ferrous metals subsidiary, on a verticalisation trajectory. The group now operates across 36 countries. It has a presence in sectors such as carbon black, aluminium, chemicals, pulp, fibre, renewable energy, financial services and textiles. UltraTech is India's largest cement company, while Hindalco Industries is the world's largest flat-rolled product player and recycler of aluminium.

RACHIT GOSWAMI

VIVAN MEHRA

Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw, *69*

Executive Chairperson, Biocon

Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw is a first-generation entrepreneur and global business leader with over four decades of experience in biotechnology. Fuelled by her passion, she started her biotech journey in 1978 from her garage in India. Today, that journey is changing lives for the better across the globe. She is regarded as an unconventional thinker with many firsts to her credit. Under her aegis, Biocon delivers on the promise of making medicines accessible and affordable to millions of patients worldwide. Mazumdar-Shaw is one of India's richest self-made women. The firm has successfully forayed into the lucrative US market. The company has Asia's largest insulin factory in Malaysia's Johor region.

Big, Bold and Powerful

Ten mega public infrastructure projects that have had a profound impact on post-Independence India's overall development

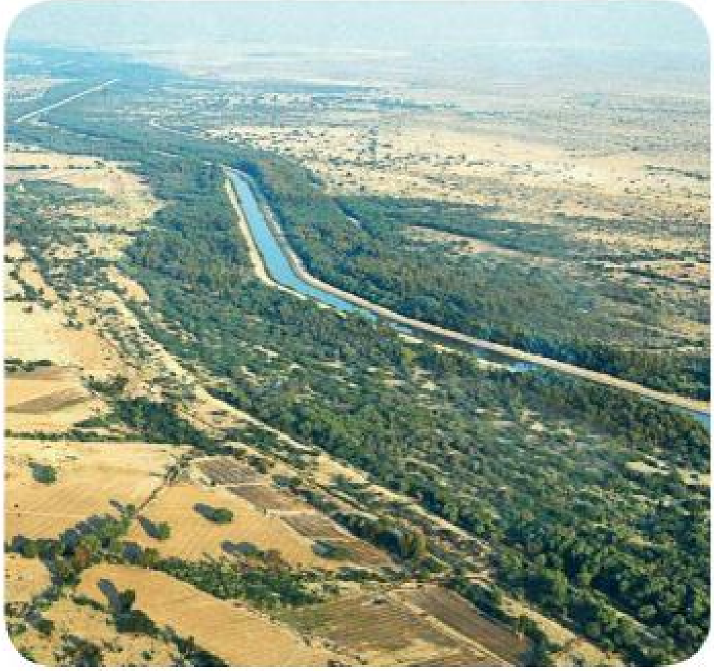
By **VINAYAK CHATTERJEE**

Founder & Managing Trustee, The Infravision Foundation

Indira Gandhi Canal (formerly Rajasthan Canal)

Conceived in 1948

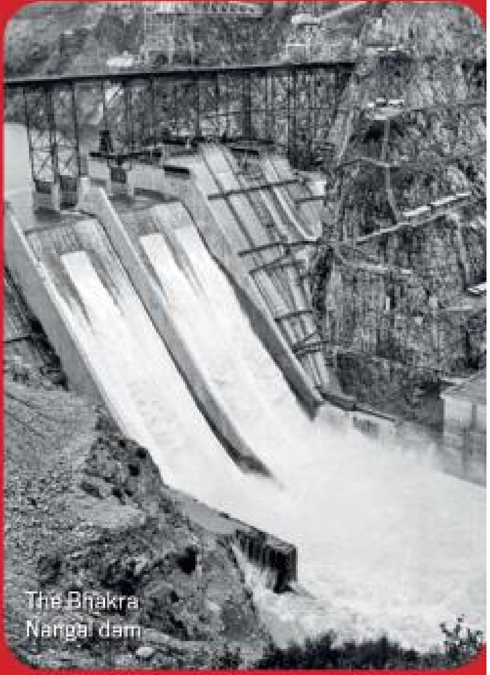
The 650 km Indira Gandhi Canal is the longest canal in India. It starts at Harike Barrage in Punjab and ends at the irrigation facilities in the Thar Desert in western Rajasthan. Conceived in 1948 with an aim to green the semi-arid and arid areas of Rajasthan, the canal irrigates 29 lakh acres annually. The project's construction commenced in 1952 and the last portion was completed in 2010. The main 445-km-long Rajasthan canal starts after a feeder canal stretching 167 km through Punjab and Haryana and another 37 km in Rajasthan. Its route and command area cover seven districts of Rajasthan: Sriganganagar, Churu, Hanumangarh, Bikaner, Jodhpur, Jaisalmer and Barmer. The project demonstrated the widespread benefits of a massive irrigation project.



PURUSHOTTAM DIWAKAR

Bhakra Nangal/ Damodar Valley Corporation

Completed in 1963/came into existence in 1948



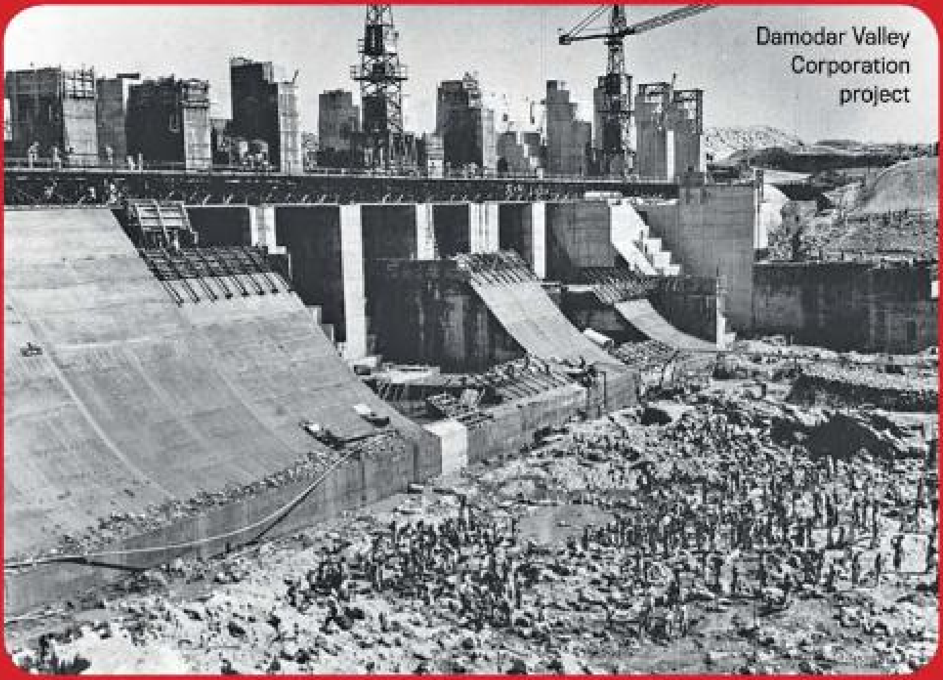
The Bhakra Nangal dam

GETTY IMAGES

The Bhakra Nangal project, on the Sutlej River in Himachal Pradesh, is one of the oldest development projects for river valleys established after Independence. Its construction, which started in 1953, was completed in 1963 at a cost of around Rs 245.28 crore. Jawaharlal Nehru, the then prime minister, dedicated the dam to the nation, calling such projects executed by the public sector "the temples of modern India". The dam provides water for irrigation in Himachal

Pradesh, Punjab, Haryana, Rajasthan and Gujarat, in addition to generating hydroelectric power for these states.

The Damodar Valley Corporation (DVC), which operates in the Damodar river area of West Bengal and Jharkhand, came into existence on July 7, 1948. It was the first multipurpose river valley project of independent India—formed with the central government and the governments of Bihar (later Jharkhand) and West Bengal participating in it. The project aimed at flood control, irrigation, generation and transmission of electricity and year-round navigation. Such projects were early demonstrators of the massive economic impact that large public works projects had.


Damodar Valley Corporation project

INDIA PICTURE

INDIA PICTURE

Konkan Railway

First train ran in 1998

The Konkan coast of India did not have a railway link for most of the modern era. The Konkan Railway, one of the 19 railway zones in India, was conceived to bridge this gap. The 756.25-km-long railway line connects Maharashtra, Goa and Karnataka. The first train on the completed track ran on January 26, 1998. The project was one of the most challenging in the history of Indian Railways, and the man then at the helm, E. Sreedharan, is famed for having completed it in record time. The project involved over 2,116 bridges (of which the Panvalnadi bridge was the highest viaduct in India till 2010) and 92 tunnels and was the largest railway project of the century in Asia.

Mumbai-Pune Expressway

Fully operationalised in 2002

The Mumbai-Pune Expressway (officially Yashwantrao Chavan Expressway) is India's first six-lane-wide, concrete, access-controlled toll expressway. Spanning a distance of 94.5 km, it has reduced travel time by two hours, in comparison to the old highway. The expressway, which was fully operationalised in 2002, introduced new levels of speed and safety in automobile transportation to Indian roads and remains one of India's busiest roads currently. It handles about 43,000 passenger cars daily and is designed to handle up to 100,000. It was one of the first iconic road projects that used the principle of "build by sovereign, then monetise by private capital".

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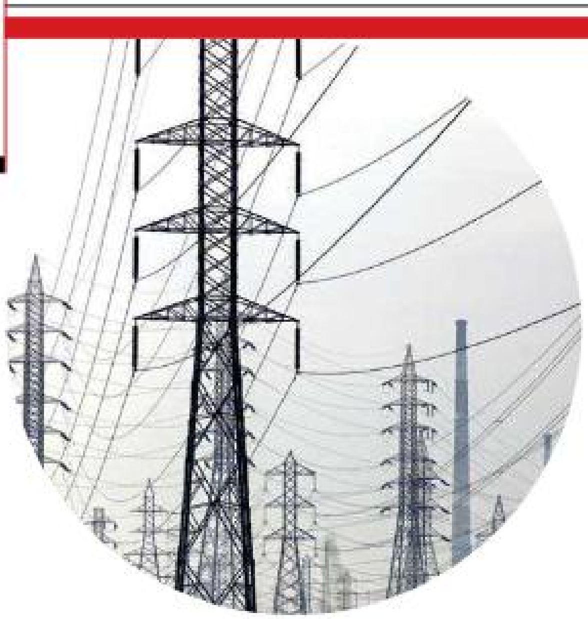
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National Power Grid

Completed in 2013

The National Grid is a high-voltage electricity transmission network built over the years connecting power stations and major substations and ensuring that electricity generated anywhere in India can be used to satisfy demand elsewhere. Owned and maintained by the state-owned Power Grid Corporation of India and operated by the state-owned Power System Operation Corporation, it is one of the largest operational synchronous grids in the world with 371.054 GW of power transmission capacity as of June 30, 2020. It is believed that India's national power transmission grid creates a unified power market that is bigger and more efficient than Europe's.

National Highways Development Programme

Launched in 1998

The National Highways Development Programme (NHDP) was launched in 1998 with the objective of developing roads of international standards that facilitate the smooth flow of traffic. It envisaged the creation of roads with enhanced safety features, better riding surface, grade separators and other salient features. National Highways constitute only 2 per cent of the total road length in the country, but carry 40 per cent of the total traffic. NHDP is being implemented by the National Highways Authority of India in seven phases. It is the largest unified and managed roads programme in the world.

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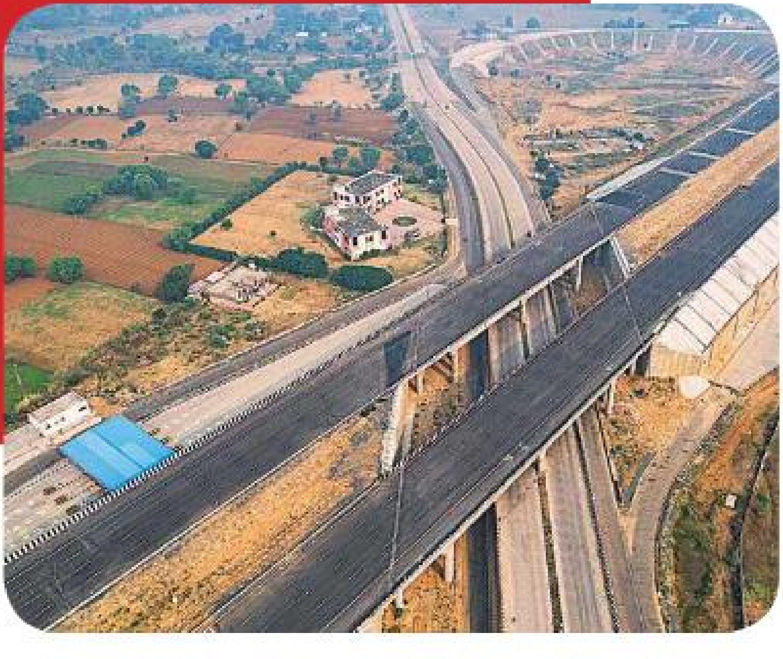
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Delhi Metro

First corridor opened in 2002

The Delhi Metro, built and operated by the Delhi Metro Rail Corporation, is a mass rapid transit system serving Delhi and its satellite cities of Ghaziabad, Faridabad, Gurugram, Noida, Bahadurgarh and Ballabhgarh, in the National Capital Region. The network consists of 10 colour-coded lines serving 255 stations with a total length of 348.12 km. It is by far the largest and busiest metro rail system in India, and the second oldest after the Kolkata Metro. The system has a mix of underground, at-grade and elevated stations. Delhi Metro showed the way to many other cities—today, India has 23 metro rail projects.

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JITHENDRA M

Privatisation of airports

Approved by the government in 2003

The idea of modernising Delhi and Mumbai airports was first considered by the Airport Authority of India (AAI) in 1996. In September 2003, the Centre approved a long-term lease by joint venture route with 74 per cent equity to a private consortium and 26 per cent with AAI. At present, airports at Delhi, Mumbai, Bengaluru, Hyderabad and Kochi are managed under the public-private partnership (PPP) model. The Union Budget since 2016-17 has laid increased focus on the PPP mode in airport development that would eventually lead to a drastic reduction in logistics cost and pave the way for sustainable growth. In 2020, under the Aatmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan, the government had conducted an auction to privatise six more airports. In the second round of auctions, the government decided to privatise 13 airports. Recently, the Centre has unveiled its plans to privatise 25 airports over the next five years under the National Monetisation Pipeline.

ANI

Zojila Tunnel, J&K

Last phase set to be completed in 2025

The 14.15 km-long Zojila tunnel is the first-of-its-kind tunnel project in the Himalayas, given the challenging geographical conditions. It will be the highest tunnel, at an altitude of 11,578 ft. It is also set to become the longest road tunnel in India and the longest bi-directional tunnel in Asia, providing all-weather connectivity between Srinagar and Leh via Dras and Kargil on the National Highway 1. The last phase of the construction works is expected to be completed in September 2025, ahead of its deadline of November 2026. Once the final tube of the project gets completed, the 32 km distance from Sonamarg to Minamarg will be covered in less than 40 minutes instead of four hours.

Electricity connections for all

Launched in 2017

The Pradhan Mantri Sahaj Bijli Har Ghar Yojana—Saubhagya, launched in September 2017—aims to provide electricity access to all households in rural as well as urban areas. There are about 40 million unelectrified households estimated in the country, of which about 10 million below-poverty line households in rural areas are already covered under sanctioned projects of Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Gram Jyoti Yojana. Thus, 30 million households are expected to be covered under the Saubhagya scheme at a cost of Rs 16, 320 crore.

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THE BEST OF INDIA

DECISIVE BATTLES

By **LT GEN. DEEPENDRA SINGH HOODA (RETD)**

Former General Officer Commanding-in-Chief, Northern Command

GUTS AND GLORY

Two months after Independence, the Indian military was engaged in the first of the many wars and conflicts it would fight to safeguard the country's national security. I have looked at battles that were won and contributed significantly to influencing the post-war geostrategic landscape and the shaping of India's frontiers. The emphasis on India's frontiers is essential, as most of the wars have been a result of disputed borders. Some notable omissions could strike readers. The 1962 war was not considered because the focus was on battles that India won. The Haji Pir battle of the 1965 war was a strong contender, but missed out as the territory gained was returned after the war.

Defence of Poonch

(1947-48 war)

After the capture of Uri, two battalions under Lt Col. (later promoted to Brigadier) Pritam Singh fought their way into Poonch town, which was surrounded by the raiders. For one year, supported by locals, they held out against all odds. The IAF played an invaluable role in establishing an air bridge, flying in supplies, guns and ammunition. Brigadier Pritam not only defended the town but also ensured that the civil population of approximately 45,000 was supported and fed. The strong bonds established between the army and the civilians during this period endure even today.

BETTMANN ARCHIVE

Battle of Shalateng

(1947-48 war)

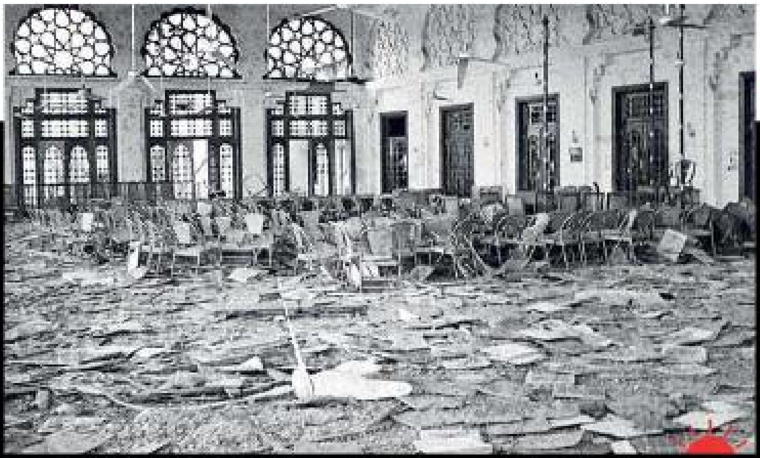
On October 22, 1947, Pashtun tribal militia crossed the boundary of the princely state of Jammu and Kashmir and advanced rapidly along the Jhelum valley. Unable to stop the raiders, Maharaja Hari Singh signed the Instrument of Accession, and the first unit of the Indian Army was airlifted to Srinagar on October 27. The gallant efforts of Lieutenant Colonel Ranjit Rai of 1 Sikh and Major Somnath Sharma of 4 Kumaon helped prevent the raiders from capturing the Srinagar airfield, which was vital for the build-up of Indian troops. On November 7, the Indian Army mounted its first offensive at Shalateng, about 15 km west of Srinagar. In a classic enveloping attack with infantry and armoured cars, supported by effective strafing by the Indian Air Force, the raiders were completely routed. They fled, with the Indian Army in pursuit. Within a week, areas up to Uri had been recaptured. The Kashmir valley was firmly in India's control.

Operation Bison: Tanks at Zoji la

(1947-48 war)

By August 1948, the situation in Ladakh was extremely precarious. Skardu garrison had fallen, and Leh was besieged. The route to Leh from Srinagar was cut off, with Pakistani troops occupying the 11,600 ft high Zoji La, Kargil, and Dras. The first attack on Zoji La, launched by 77 Para Brigade in September 1948, failed to dislodge the defenders. With winter approaching, the situation was critical, and it was decided to launch an audacious attack, employing Stuart tanks that were secretly moved from Jammu. After improving the track to Zoji La, the combined attack of infantry, tanks, and armoured cars was launched on November 1 amidst falling snow. The assault completely surprised the Pakistanis, and Zoji La fell in a few hours. This success paved the way for the capture of Dras and Kargil, and the Pakistanis retreated to Skardu. The route to Leh was open.

These three battles define the current geographies of the Kashmir, Jammu, and Ladakh regions. It is not difficult to imagine India's almost insurmountable geostrategic challenges if Poonch, parts of the Kashmir valley, or Leh were in Pakistani control today.



Bombing of the Governor's House

(1971 Indo-Pak war)

The 1971 war was the Indian military's finest hour, liberating Bangladesh in two weeks and taking 93,000 Pakistani soldiers prisoners. According to the official history of the 1971 India-Pakistan War, the task allotted to Eastern Command was to "destroy the bulk of the Pakistan forces in the Eastern Theatre and occupy the major portion of East Pakistan, including the entry ports of Chittagong and Chalna-Khulna". Dhaka was not mentioned as a military objective as it was considered beyond the Eastern Command's capability. By December 9, 4 Corps had secured the eastern bank of Meghna and completed the task allotted to it. However, Lt Gen. Sagat Singh, the Corps Commander, ordered a heli-lift of troops across the Meghna. Between December 9 and 11, the IAF airlifted the entire 311 Brigade, flying more than 110 sorties and landing them barely 60 km from Dhaka. On December 14, Indian artillery fired its first salvo into the heart of Dhaka. Combined with the crossing of Meghna, the Tangail airdrop completely dislocated the defence of Dhaka. 2 Para, airdropped north of Tangail, captured the Poongli bridge and cut off Pakistan's 93 Infantry Brigade that was rushing south to reinforce Dhaka. In considerable measure, the Meghna heli-lift and the Tangail airdrop created the conditions for the complete surrender of the Pakistan Army in East Bengal. The final blow was struck by four MiG 21s and four Hunters on December 14, which attacked the Dhaka Governor's House with rockets, ripping the massive roof off the main hall. The East Pakistan Governor, Dr A.M. Malik was so rattled after the incident that he resigned with a "shaking ballpoint pen", hastening the surrender.

BHAWAN SINGH

Naval Blockade of East Pakistan

(1971 Indo-Pak war)

At the start of the war, the Indian Navy established an effective blockade of East Pakistan, trapping Pakistan's naval assets in their ports. On December 3, Pakistani submarine PNS *Ghazi* was sunk while attempting to lay mines off the Visakhapatnam coast. From December 4, Seahawk and Alize aircraft from India's aircraft carrier INS *Vikrant* carried out devastating attacks on Chittagong, Cox's Bazar, Chalna and Khulna. On December 12, The Fleet Commander reported to the Flag Officer Commanding-in-Chief, Eastern Naval Command: "There is no merchant ship...in Chittagong harbour and approaches which has not been struck and incapacitated." The successful blockade, destruction of ports, and prevention of any escape from East Pakistan contributed significantly to the final outcome of the war. Although India's borders remained unchanged after the war, the birth of Bangladesh created a completely different strategic geography for India and its security calculus.

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Operations in Partapur Sector

(1971 Indo-Pak War)

These operations took place along the Shyok river at heights of more than 18,000 ft. with a total force of three Ladakh Scout companies supported by 500 hastily raised local militia called Nubra Guards. The Indian attack was led by Major Chewang Rinchen (*top*), who had earlier earned an MVC in the 1947 war and a Sena Medal in the 1962 war. Starting on December 8, this force advanced 22 km up to Thang village, including the capture of Point 18402, the highest post ever captured till then. At a cost of three wounded by enemy action and 45 casualties due to frostbite, Maj. Rinchen had liberated 800 sq. km from PoK (the largest area captured in the '71 operations). The strategic value of this was realised after the Indian Army occupied the Saltoro Range overlooking the Siachen Glacier in 1984. The areas captured in 1971 provided a secure southern flank that strengthened India's defensive positions along the Saltoro.

Operation Meghdoot, *1984*

On April 13, 1984, Captain Sanjay Kulkarni and 28 soldiers of 4 Kumaon were heli-landed at Bilafond La on the Saltoro range. Three days later, another group of Ladakh Scouts landed at Sia La. Thus began India's physical occupation of what is commonly called the Siachen sector. In life-threatening conditions and at an enormous human cost, the Indian Army has continued to hold this area. There are divergent views on the strategic importance of Siachen. Many dismiss the idea of large-scale operations in this area as far-fetched, while others point out that any direct military collusion between China and Pakistan can occur only in this sector. Whatever the merits of these arguments, it is evident that Siachen presents an indomitable frontier of India's territorial control.

PRAMOD PUSHKARNA

Battle of Tololing

Kargil War, 1999

On May 3, 1999, a local shepherd reported the presence of Pakistani soldiers who had infiltrated the Kargil sector. Over the next week, multiple intrusions were reported across the sector—Pakistan had established around 130 posts across the LoC. The Pakistani aim was to cut off National Highway 1A that passes over Zoji La to Leh, hoping it would pressurise India to vacate the Siachen Glacier. Dominating NH1A at Dras is the 16,000 feet high Tololing feature from where Pakistani soldiers could interdict all movement. The battle for Tololing commenced on May 23 and, over the next 20 days, there was an intense fight, often at a distance of a few metres, as 18 Grenadiers attempted to dislodge the enemy from their entrenched positions. Tololing was captured on June 13. This first decisive victory proved to be the turning point of the Kargil War.

> BRAHMOS is a weapon par excellence. Its continuous evolution in terms of technological superiority and strength has transformed it into an unparalleled system. With newer, more advanced variants presently under development, BRAHMOS is well positioned to retain its leadership into the distant future as well

BRAHMOS REINVIGORATING MODERN INDIA'S MILITARY MIGHT

Shri Atul Dinkar Rane
Outstanding Scientist
Director General (BrahMos), DRDO
CEO & MD, BrahMos Aerospace

India's steady advancements in defence technology sphere since Independence has placed it among an elite league of nations possessing top-end, state-of-the-art military hardware. Despite long technology denial regimes the nation faced post-Independence, India has surpassed all hurdles to build a formidable military force.

Among the many powerful platforms and systems inducted in the Indian Armed Forces over the years, one weapon stands out as 'an indispensable combat asset' of modern times. BRAHMOS supersonic cruise missile system, jointly designed and developed by India and Russia, has revolutionised high-end military technology involving precision-guided weapons.

When precision guided missiles were making an impact in the battlefields in the 1990s, the emergence of BRAHMOS as world's fastest cruise missile system redefined modern warfare dynamics and strategy. Combining supersonic speed, deadly accuracy, massive firepower, stealth, and versatility, BRAHMOS established its supremacy as the 'ultimate game-changer'.

The coming together of two prominent institutions – DRDO of India and NPOM of Russia – resulted in a highly successful Joint Venture (JV) defence project. BrahMos JV elevated the 'buyer-seller' relationship between New Delhi and Moscow to 'joint partner' status and became a technology co-development, technology sharing programme.

The establishment of BrahMos Aerospace in February 1998 paved the way for the design, development and productionisation of BRAHMOS. The formidable weapon underwent its maiden successful test firing on June 12, 2001 and established its impeccable anti-ship capability. The spectacular launch placed India prominently in the global map.

The evolution of BRAHMOS continued thereafter and the JV programme brought many "firsts" for India. The powerful missile became the only weapon in its category to be inducted in all three Services of Indian Armed Forces subsequently. Owing to its cutting-edge technological superiority and highly advanced design parameters, BRAHMOS could be seamlessly integrated into the land, naval and air platforms of India.

Indian Navy deployed the deadly weapon in 2005 followed by the Indian Army in 2007, thus fortifying their capability to undertake combat operations in their respective frontiers with enormous firepower and vigour.

In 2017, BrahMos JV achieved an incredible milestone which created ripples across the world. The highly advanced BRAHMOS air-launched cruise missile (ALCM) system integrated with the frontline Sukhoi-30MKI fighter platform of Indian Air Force (IAF) underwent maiden successful launch on November 22 and validated its precision attack capability against a sea-based target.

The spectacular mission was a "first-in-the-world" feat and completed India's 'supersonic cruise missile triad'. BRAHMOS-A subsequently established its land-attack capability which bolstered the IAF's modern air combat power from stand-off ranges.

The multi-role, multi-platform BRAHMOS today has revolutionised "across-the-spectrum" warfare for joint battlefield operations.

BrahMos JV has exemplified the flagship 'Make in India' endeavours by forming the unique "BRAHMOS MIC" (missile industrial consortium). The MIC, involving a large number of public & private defence sector enterprises, institutions and laboratories of India and Russia, has been greatly contributing to the success story of BRAHMOS.

BrahMos Aerospace, in close coordination with DRDO, has also realised indigenisation of major technologies, components and systems for BRAHMOS, thus reducing the weapon's overall production, operation and maintenance costs while bolstering national security aspects.

"BRAHMOS is a weapon par excellence. Its continuous evolution in terms of technological superiority and strength has transformed it into an unparalleled system. With newer, more advanced variants presently under development, BRAHMOS is well positioned to retain its leadership into the distant future as well," says Shri Atul D Rane, Director General, BrahMos, DRDO and CEO & MD, BrahMos Aerospace.

In 2022, supersonic BRAHMOS carved its global footprint and became India's first full-scale weapon receiving a historic export order from the Republic of Philippines. Under the export contract signed on January 28, 2022, BrahMos Aerospace will deliver the shore-based BRAHMOS anti-ship weapon system to the Armed Forces of Philippines.

The BRAHMOS export breakthrough has propelled forward India's aspirations to achieve military exports worth US$5 billion by 2025.

47TH ANNIVERSARY

THE BEST OF INDIA

DIPLOMATIC ACHIEVEMENTS

By T.C.A. RAGHAVAN

Former Indian High Commissioner to Pakistan and Singapore

Worldly Wise

Diplomacy is a process; real successes and failures sometimes manifest years after the event. What is hailed as a triumph today may be perceived as an optical illusion or even a debacle later. This listing also filters out the foreign policy achievements that are the accumulated outcome of technological progress (such as the Peaceful Nuclear Explosion of 1974) or military power (the battlefield victory in Bangladesh in 1971 or the Kargil war), although both categories of achievements had a significant diplomatic aspect. This is a listing of known and less well-known diplomatic achievements that showcase Indian diplomacy's ability to seize opportunities, think out of the box, and hold its nerve in the face of intense global pressure.

Ending War in the Korean Peninsula

1952-54

India played peace broker in ending the Korean conflict, the first major proxy conflict of the cold war. Initially rebuffed in the United Nations by the US and the Soviet Union, Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru persisted. As a result, the final peace agreement of July 1953 owed much to the compromise suggested by India, which also played a major role in the supervision of the agreement. For a recently independent country, this was an audacious foray into the complex terrain of Cold War politics, and the experience served India well in the coming decades.

GETTY IMAGES

The Bandung Conference

Indonesia, 1955

The conference of 29 Afro-Asian nations in Bandung gave India a platform to move into a leadership position in what is now termed the 'Global South'. Although neither 'Bandung' nor the later Non-Aligned Movement came from a solely Indian initiative, they were substantially indebted to Indian diplomatic ideas and moves to consolidate a broad front of former colonies that functioned as a separate grouping in the bipolar world of the 1950s and 1960s.

UN Conference on Environment

Stockholm, 1972

The liberation of Bangladesh in December 1971 and the India–Pakistan Summit and Agreement in Simla in July 1972 overshadow India's participation at the UN Conference on the Human Environment in Sweden in June 1972. As climate change now dominates global agendas, the position India then took was paradigmatic for the Global South as a whole. By coining the phrase 'Poverty is the greatest polluter', PM **Indira Gandhi** articulated a developing country's perspective and underlined that economic development of the Global South and environment protection would have to be an integrated process.

PRASHANT PANJIAR

Resetting China Ties

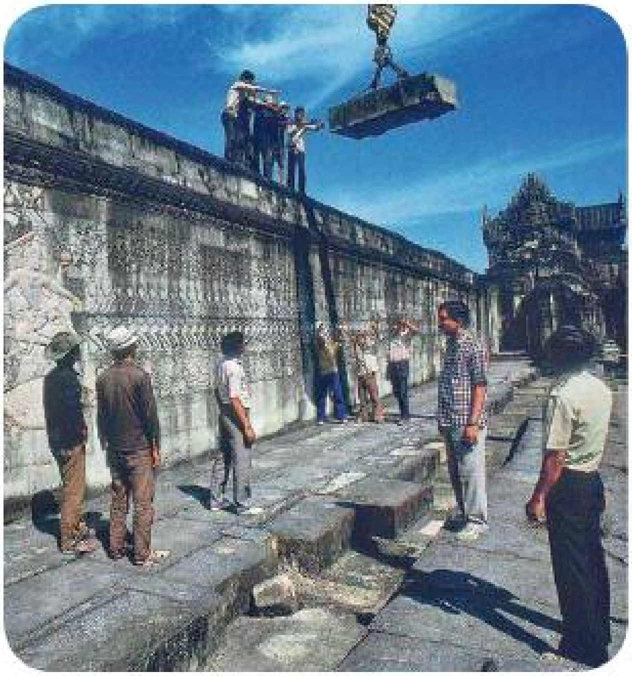
Beijing, 1988

Rajiv Gandhi's prime ministerial visit to Beijing in December 1988 changed the Indo-China relationship. The territorial dispute and the 1962 war, while not forgotten, were put aside and a pragmatic economic-oriented focus adopted in the face of changing global realities. This bilateral reset led to the 1993 agreement on maintaining peace and tranquility on the border. The 1988 visit thus heralded a quarter century of an upswing in India-China relations. Although that phase may have ended, the initiative remains a high point of courageous and hard-headed diplomacy.

Saving Angkor Wat

Cambodia, 1980s

India's dispatch of an archaeological team to war-ravaged Cambodia to conserve the archaeological site of Angkor Wat was a great leap forward for Indian cultural diplomacy. Long before the 'Look East', 'Act East' or 'Indo Pacific' era—when Cambodia was at the centre of a civil war and in a geopolitical contestation with the Soviet Union and Vietnam on one side, China and the US on the other, and largely shunned by the western camp—India was among the few countries to recognise the nation. The Indic origins of the monuments made it appropriate for India to help, but this aggrieved the French, the former colonial masters, who had studied and documented the site since the 1890s. Leading western cultural institutions denigrated Indian conservation work at the site, but Indian diplomats held their nerve and Indian archaeologists have remained in Angkor ever since.



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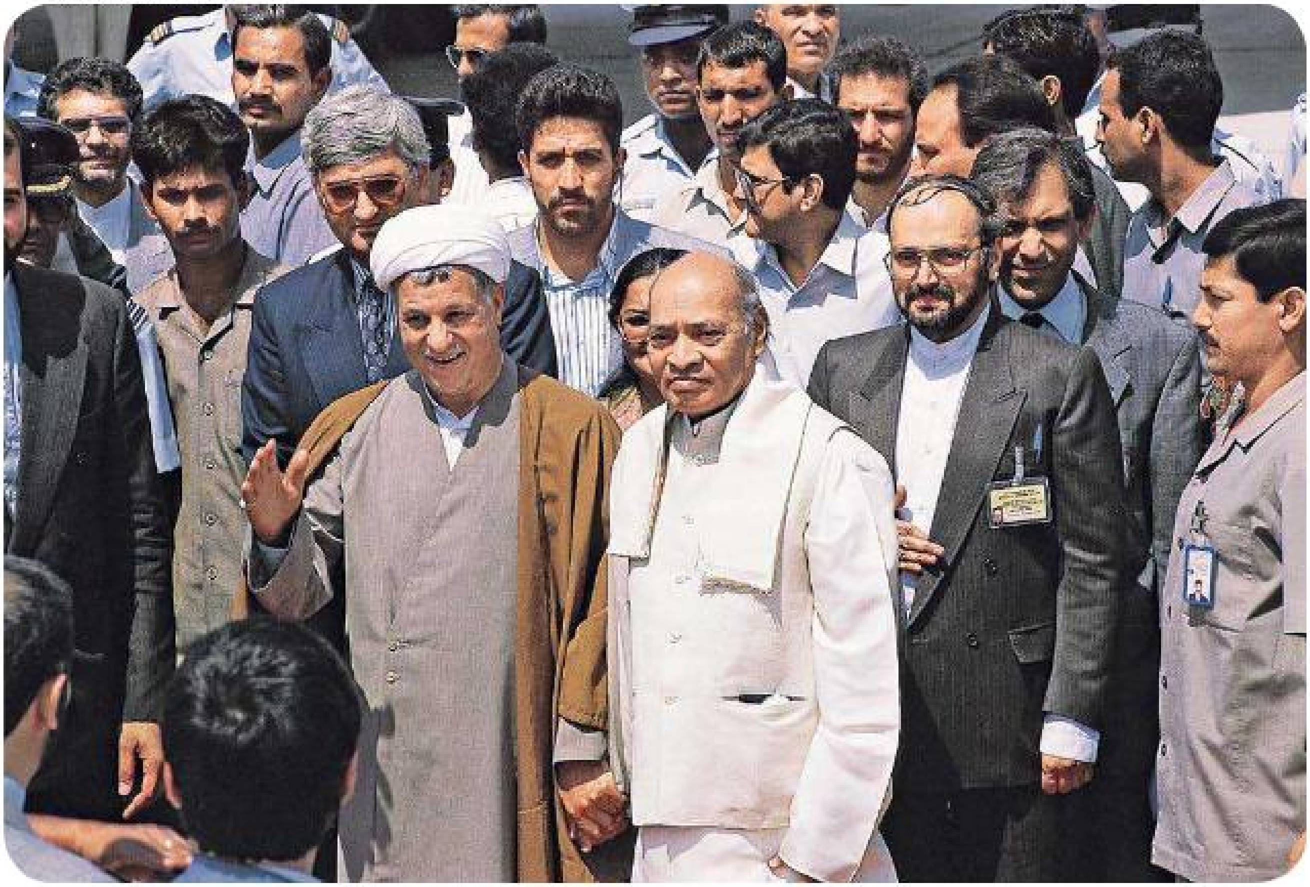
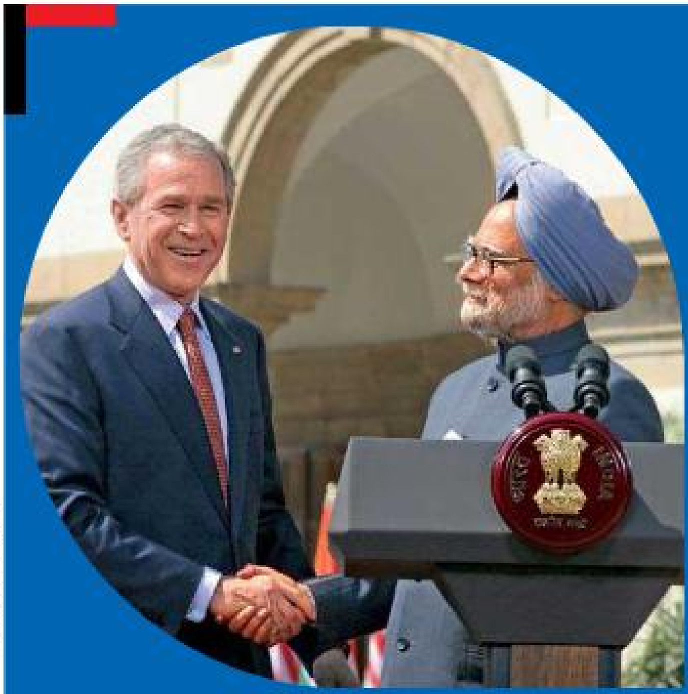


Reordering Foreign Policy

1992-93

A changed post-Cold War global reality required a larger reordering of foreign policy, which also meant discarding existing shibboleths. Prime Minister **Narasimha Rao**'s decision to establish diplomatic relations with Israel overturned four decades of following the mainstream Arab position on the issue. This was, however, part of a wider cluster of changes that included a changed external economic posture, an uptick in relations with post-revolution Iran, a new emphasis on Southeast Asia and a willingness to engage with the United States.



HEMANT CHAWLA

India-US Civil Nuclear Agreement

2005

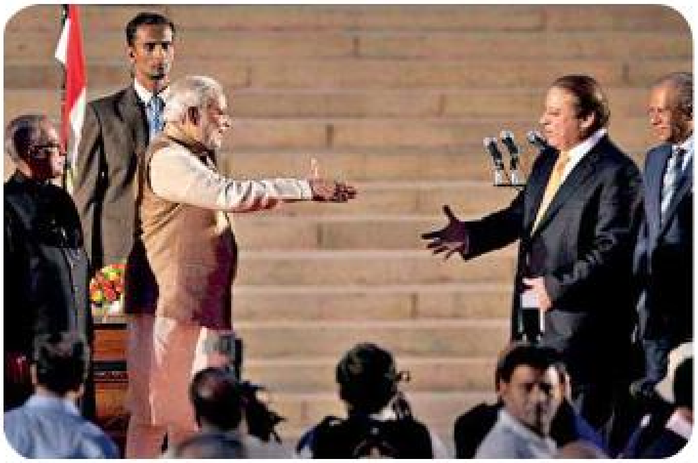
The announcement of an India-US Civil Nuclear initiative shattered many taboos. It decisively ended the external perception that India's nuclear status was somehow clandestine and heralded a new closeness in India-US relations and world views. Securing the approval of the Nuclear Suppliers Group to civil nuclear cooperation with India, and convincing Indian political opinion to adjust to the new proximity in India-US relations, brought diplomacy and domestic politics into the same equation—a potential minefield that prime minister **Manmohan Singh** navigated deftly.

GETTY IMAGES

New Diplomacy with Pakistan

2004-2008

Easing cross-border movement of people, encouraging trade and cultural cooperation—tested components of India's diplomatic toolkit to reduce tensions with recalcitrant neighbours—were intensified with Pakistan in 2004-08. The real innovation was replicating these measures across the Line of Control dividing Jammu and Kashmir. Pakistan's domestic convulsions and terrorist attacks wrecked the process, but it remains a template to be factored into future initiatives.



AP

Neighbours at PM Modi's Swearing-In

2014

Optics are important in diplomacy and inviting SAARC heads of government to attend his swearing-in was an inspired move by PM designate **Narendra Modi**. Significantly, all the invitations were accepted, including by Pakistan, with the then premier Nawaz Sharif attending the ceremony. Things did not work out as anticipated, especially with Pakistan and Nepal, but the initiative itself remains a benchmark for neighbourhood relations as a demonstration of bold and imaginative political diplomacy.

OIC foreign ministers' meet

Abu Dhabi, 2019

That external affairs minister **Sushma Swaraj** would be invited to address the OIC foreign ministers as a guest of honour in Abu Dhabi in March 2019 astounded many, given India's friction-ridden interface with the organisation since its establishment. The event remains a testimony to the virtues of quiet and patient diplomacy and equally of how PM Modi's efforts to nurture bilateral ties with each of the Gulf states paid off in a multilateral success that remains a template for future action.

By **ASHOK GULATI**

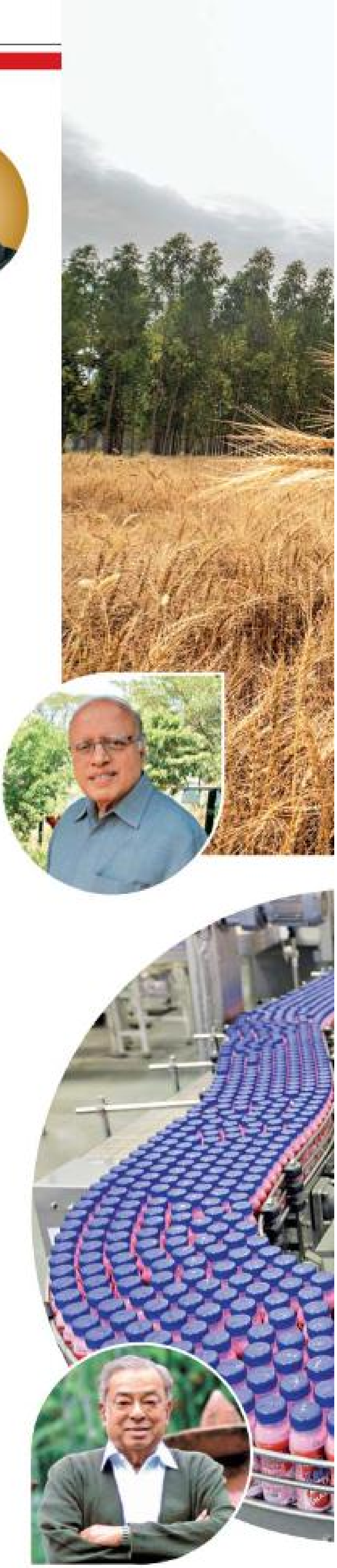
Distinguished Professor, ICRIER

A Harvest of Plenty

Over the past 75 years, India has turned from a 'ship to mouth' situation to being more or less self-sufficient in the basic staples

As India celebrates its entry into *Amritkaal* (an envisaged golden era from 2022 to 2047, the century of Independence), it is worth asking what India's biggest achievements in agriculture have been. There is no doubt that over the past 75 years, India's agriculture landscape has transformed significantly. The biggest transformation has been turning India from a 'ship to mouth' situation in the mid-'60s to being more or less self-sufficient in basic staples with some exportable surplus of cereals. It is well known that the two successive drought years in the mid-'60s exposed India's vulnerability. It was unable to feed its population and had to rely on heavy imports of wheat—almost 10 million metric tonnes (mmt) a year—under Public Law 480 of the USA against rupee payments as India did not have enough foreign exchange to buy from global markets. The country soon realised that if it was to stand as a sovereign nation, it would need self-sufficiency in basic staples like rice and wheat.

It is this political realisation that paved the way for the famous **Green Revolution**. Many of us who grew up during that period are aware of the name of American plant breeder Norman Borlaug, who had developed new dwarf varieties of wheat in Mexico, and it was the import of 18,000 tonnes of seeds of those high-yielding varieties (HYV) of wheat that led to the Green Revolution in India.



SANDEEP SAHDEV

GETTY IMAGES

1. Field of gold
A wheat farmer in Punjab; (inset) M.S. Swaminathan

2. Milky way
An Amul milk bottling factory near Ahmedabad; (inset) Verghese Kurien

Indian plant geneticist M.S. Swaminathan played a critical role not only in facilitating the import of these seeds but also making them suitable for the Indian climate. That was the first big milestone of Indian agriculture. Both these stellar scientists, Borlaug and Swaminathan, have been globally recognised for their contribution to saving millions of lives through their scientific contribution.

But how many of us are familiar with the names of US plant breeder Henry Beachell and Indian agri-scientist Gurdev Khush, both—working at the International Rice Research Institute in Los Baños, Philippines—who brought about similar revolutionary changes in rice production by developing dwarf varieties of **high-yielding rice**? Both got the World Food Prize for their contributions to the development of HYVs of rice. This would be the second biggest achievement because of its impact on India. It was because of these breakthroughs in wheat and rice during the second half of the 1960s through the mid-mid-'80s that India experienced a Green Revolution, giving it much-needed self-sufficiency in basic staples. In 2021-22, India exported about 31mmt of cereals (21mmt of rice, 7mmt of wheat, and about 3mmt of maize). India's exports of rice constituted almost 40 per cent of global rice exports, making it the biggest player in that arena.

The third and even bigger revolution took place in India's milk production. It was initially steered by Verghese Kurien under **Operation Flood**, starting in the mid-'70s. And three decades later, after the liberalisation of milk processing by the Vajpayee government in 2002-03,

In high cotton
A labourer at a cotton mill near Ahmedabad

AP

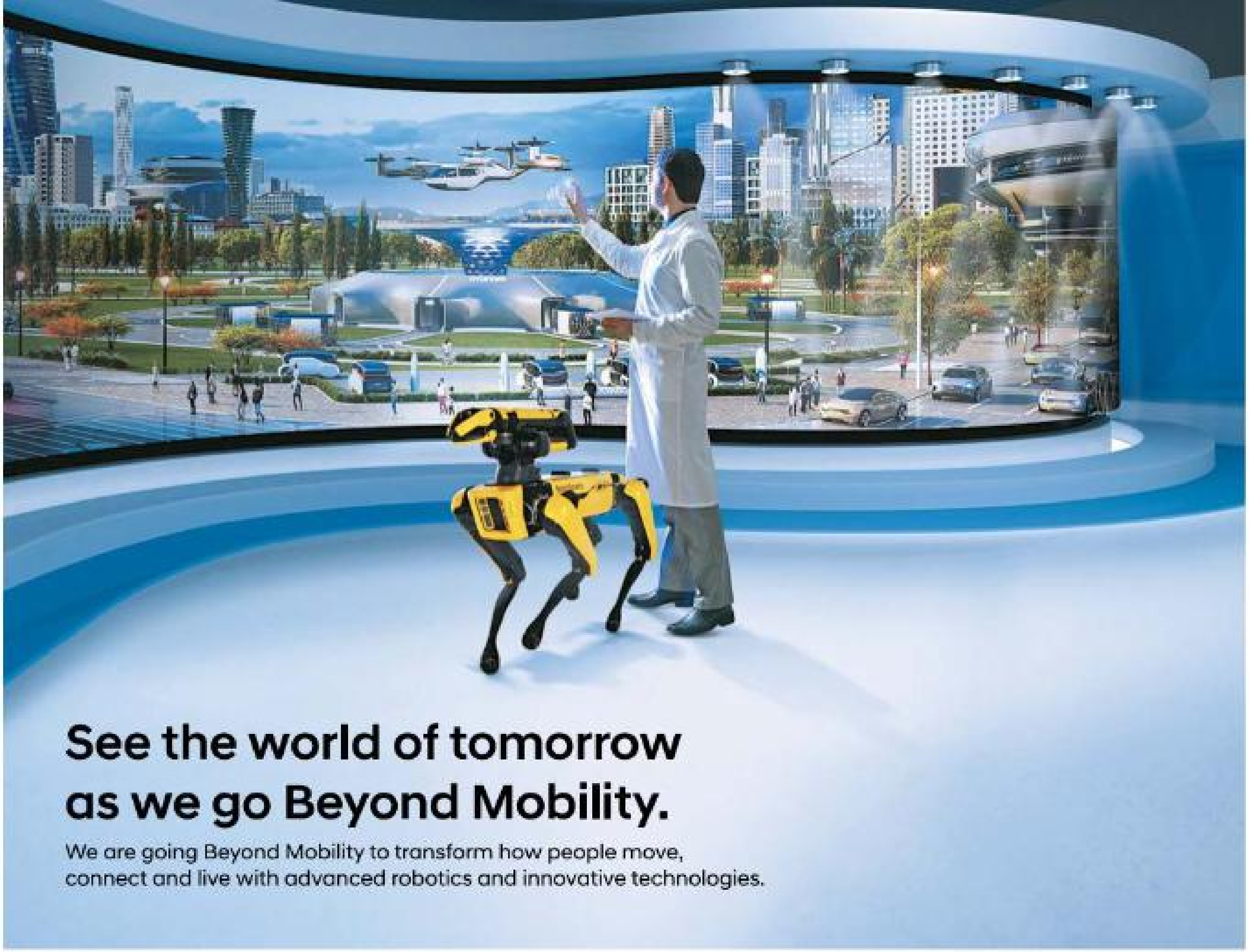
it was propelled by the private sector. Call it the 'double engine' growth of the milk sector. Indeed, the value of milk in India is more than the value of wheat, rice and sugarcane combined. An estimation of what is justly called the White Revolution can be had from the fact that in 1951, when India's milk production was 17mmt, the US had 53mmt. But by 2021, while US milk production hovered around 102mmt, India is touching 220mmt. And crucially, much of this is achieved by smallholders who have, on average, about four to five bovine animals (cows and buffaloes). It is the result of the institutional innovation that Verghese Kurien, the 'milkman of India', introduced by bringing small milk producers together through milk cooperatives to create scale, and then linking that with modern processing (pasteurising and homogenising) and organised retailing in the megacities of India.

Interestingly, the Indian agriculture landscape has changed even more over the past two decades. The Vajpayee government in 2002-03 also took a bold decision to allow the first genetically modified crop (cotton) to be grown in India. With the introduction of **Bt cotton** in 2002-03, primarily led by the big private sector seed companies, India's cotton production catapulted from 13.6 million bales (one bale is 170 kg) in 2002-03 to 39.8 million bales in 2013-14, almost a 293 per cent increase in just 11 years. This is unmatched in the history of agriculture in India. This 'gene revolution' in cotton made India the largest producer and second-largest exporter of cotton in the world. This is the fourth big milestone.

FARMERS SHOULD GET UNHINDERED ACCESS TO THE BEST TECHNOLOGIES FROM ANYWHERE IN THE WORLD AND TO THE GLOBAL MARKETS

From 2010-11 onwards, Indian agriculture has been under rapid transformation. It is worth noting that from 2010-11 to 2019-20, the value of Indian poultry meat (at constant prices) has been growing at an unprecedented rate of 10.4 per cent per annum, that of the fishery at 7.8 per cent, pulses at 5.7 per cent, dairy at 5.5 per cent, horticulture at 4.9 per cent, eggs at 4.9 per cent, cotton at 4.6 per cent, sugarcane at 3.9 per cent, oilseeds at 3.3 per cent, and cereals at 3.1 per cent. All these annual growth rates need to be seen in relation to the population growth rate, which has been declining gradually over the years and stands at around 1 per cent today. This clearly indicates that the per capita availability of food and fibre has been increasing quite fast.

That India has gone from food deficiency to self-sufficiency—except for the notable exception of edible oils, where we still import 55 to 60 per cent of our needs—is itself surely one of the biggest achievements. Now, Indian agriculture is a **net exporting sector**. The fifth biggest achievement is that this success story was written by the smallholders of India whose average holding size is a meagre 1.08 hectare (as per the 2015-16 Land Census), duly supported by science, be it of Indian origin or imported. Remember, the seeds of the Green Revolution came from outside the country and so did of Bt cotton. Lesson for future change: farmers should get access to the best technologies from anywhere in the world. And if a policy environment is created wherein they can also access global markets unhindered, one can confidently say that the best of agriculture in India is yet to come. ■



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INNOCEAN-034/21

UTTARAKHAND

EMPOWERING THE MATRI SHAKTI

Women power has an important role in society, and one cannot imagine an ideal society without empowerment of the women. Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami is continuously trying to make Uttarakhand the leading state of the country by the year 2025. The date of 30 November this year was historic for Uttarakhand when two very important bills were passed during the supplementary budget session with voice vote. The Uttarakhand Public Services (Horizontal reservation for women) bill-2022 has paved way for the horizontal reservation of 30% for women in the state.

This is a great achievement for Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami government. State government is going to take another important step for women empowerment. Efforts are being made for drafting Uttarakhand State Women Policy. State Women Commission has prepared the initial draft of the policy in which emphasis has been given on social, economic and political upliftment of the women of the state.

In accordance with Prime Minister Narendra Modi's 'Beti Bachao-Beti Padhao' mega campaign, the Nanda Gaura scheme of the Uttarakhand government is also making women of the state stronger and self-reliant. The Government of Uttarakhand stood by with the girls of the state from their birth to their education and marriage. A total of 323 crore 22 lakh rupees has been deposited digitally through PFMS into the accounts of 80 thousand beneficiary girls under Nanda Gaura scheme from 2017-18 to year 2021-22. To make this scheme more effective the state government has made all the procedures online from this year so that the girls of the state should not run from pillar to post in government offices, and they can utilise time for their progress.

Women empowerment is only possible when women will feel safe in the society. In this direction, the work of the Uttarakhand Government is worth mentioning. Along with Mahila Mitra or women friend, Women Sub-Inspector is also being deployed in every police station of the state. This will help in fast settlement of complaints, and it will also encourage the woman to tell their problems without any hesitation. Government is strengthening the police help desk and helpline number 112. Women are being assured that the government is serious on the issue of their security. Feedback is also being taken from the complainant women.

To make things easy for working women, directions have been given to all departments to prepare an effective scheme. It has been directed also that the maternity leave of working

> “Women power has very important role in the formation and development of Uttarakhand State. Our government is making all possible efforts for women empowerment. We are trying to make the mothers and sisters of the state economically self reliant.
>
> — *Pushkar Singh Dhami*
> *Chief Minister, Uttarakhand*

women should be approved timely, and they should not face any problem in getting other allowances and leave. Help desk is being formed in all offices for this purpose. Police, labour, and other concerned departments are working in tandem for this. Hostels are being opened at every district headquarter for working women so that they can get a secure and comfortable environment. In this way women will be able to make their future better by working outside of their home in a secure environment. The women empowerment and child development department has built up a Veerangna Teelu Rautela women hostel in Dehradun and another hostel in Haridwar. Efforts are being made to provide hostel facilities at subsidised rates for working women in other districts also to make them self-reliant.

For better settlement of complaints related to sexual harassment at working places, awareness is being created regarding sexual harassment electronic box. To make such measures more effective the police department is working with women organisations. The committees formed for women security at district level are continuously assessing the effectiveness of government schemes in their meetings. To bring transparency in the working of police and to take strict action against criminals the names of the criminals are being uploaded on the website of the police department. Every district magistrate is reviewing the progress in the cases related to crime against women in his/her district. Criminals are getting punishment from courts after removal of deficiencies in investigation and prosecution. It is the effect of the strictness by the government that out of all those complaints received in the last 10 months on Chief Minister helpline, 92% have been resolved.

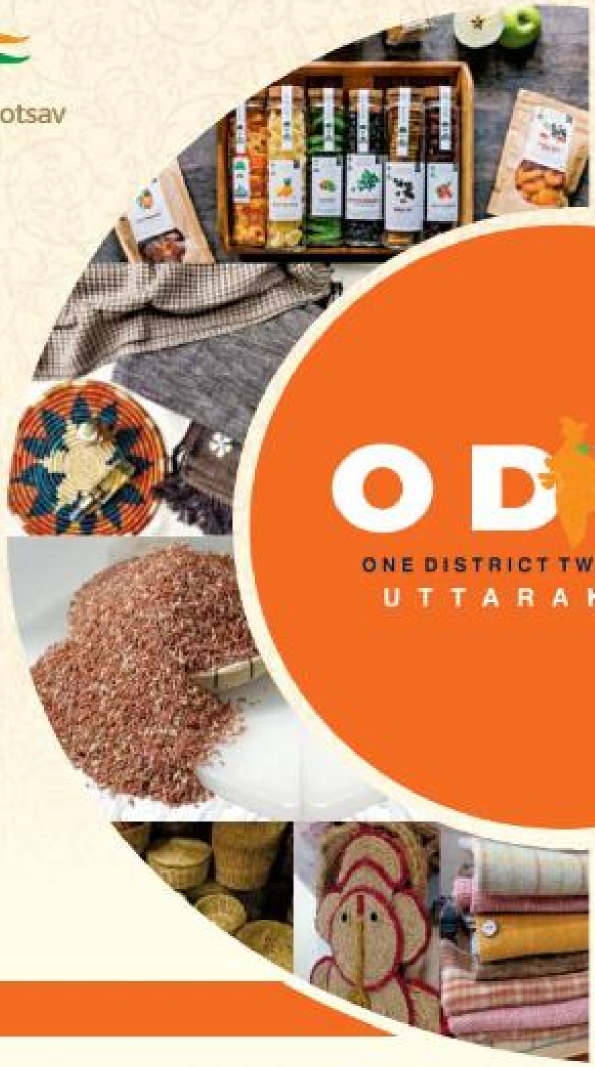
In the year 2025 when Uttarakhand State will be celebrating the silver jubilee of its formation, by then the target of turning 1.25 lakh women of state into Lakhpati Didi will also be completed. The initiative of the state government will definitely play an important role in economic development of women. Loan up to 5 lakh rupees is being given to women self-help groups without any interest. Many efforts are being made to promote local products by connecting self-help groups. During a programm in maana gaon, Prime Minister Narendra Modi gave a clarion call to all citizens and devotees that they should spend at least 5% of their money reserved for travel on purchasing local products, it will not only help in promotion of local women self help groups and local products but will also increase the income of women.

PRIORITY IS WOMEN EMPOWERMENT

- Supplementary nutrition in the form of THR is being given to 156725 pregnant and maternal women and 392264 children aged between 6 months to 3 years registered at Anganwadi centres
- Under the Mukhymantri Anchal Amrit Yojana eggs and banana or banana chips are being distributed bi-weekly among 213527 children coming to Anganwadi centres.
- Under mukhyamantri Aanchal Amrit Yojana 45 vitamin A and flavoured milk with vitamin D along with the freshly cooked food are being provided to 213527 children at Anganwadi centres.
- Mahalaxmi kits have been provided under Mahalaxmi scheme to the pregnant women after their delivery and their newborn girl child registered at Anganwadi centre.
- An expenditure of 47 crores will be spent on Nanda Gaora scheme being implemented by women empowerment and child development department which will benefit 31574 girl child.
- From 2019-20 to till date 2725 women got benefit under mukhymantri satat ajivika Yojana and 4235 got benefited from Uttarakhand mahila samekit Vikas Yojana.
- A total of 3657 girls have received grant for marriage in last 3 years. These girls are from scheduled castes scheduled Tribes and also daughters of the general category women beneficiary of widow pension scheme.
- In order to develop a better eco-system for women's safety, the facility of self-registration and e-complaint has been started for women working in government and non-government offices under Gaura Shakti option given in the Uttarakhand Police app.
- Initiative has been taken to make women co-owner of the ancestral property. For this Uttarakhand zamindari vinash and Bhu vyavastha adhiniyam 1950 has been implemented in state
- Ghasiyari scheme has been initiated to remove the baggage of grass from the women. Under the scheme a kit has been provided by the State government to every woman of the cattle owner family.

Govt. of Uttarakhand

Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav



ODTP

ONE DISTRICT TWO PRODUCTS
UTTARAKHAND

Tourists should spend 5% of their travel spending on local products: Prime Minister

To achieve the goal of self-reliant country Prime Minister Narendra Modi has spoken of Vocal for local. With the aim of promoting local products, One District-One Product Scheme has been started by the Government of India.

Uttarakhand Government has taken this scheme forward as "One District Two Products" under the leadship of Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami.

Programme done in Mana Village near Badrinath Dhaam Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi has appealed to the people of the country to spend 5% of their travelled spending on Local Products.

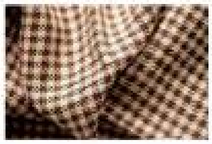
Due to this tremendous a big change will be seen in local economy.

Any region is identified by its local language & products. Efforts should be made to promote them.

ALMORA

Baal Mithai

Tweed



HARIDWAR

Jaggery

Honey

CHAMOLI

Handloom Products

Rose Water

DEHRADUN

Bakery Products

Mushroom

Issued in public interest by department of information and public relations, Uttarakhand.

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भारत 2023 INDIA
वसुधैव कुटुम्बकम्
ONE EARTH ONE FAMILY ONE FUTURE

Narendra Modi
Prime Minister

Pushkar Singh Dhami
Chief Minister, Uttarakhand

LOCAL PRODUCTS GETTING RECOGNITION THROUGH ONE DISTRICT-TWO PRODUCT SCHEME

PITHORAGARH

Woolen Carpets

Munsyari Rajma

BAGESHWAR

Copper Products

Kiwi Products

NAINITAL

Aipan Craft

Furit Processing

PAURI

Wooden Craft

Herbal Products

TEHRI GARHWAL

Paneer

Tehri Nath

CHAMPAWAT

Iron Based Products

Honey

UTTARKASHI

Red Rice

Apple Products

UDHAMSINGHNAGAR

Mentha Oil

Moonj Grass Products

RUDRAPRAYAG

Temple Imitation

Cholai Products

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By **K. SRINATH REDDY**

Distinguished Professor of Public Health, Public Health Foundation of India

A Robust Pulse

In a subcontinental spread like India with a highly populous federal polity, the health challenges are many and achievements vary across states. That said, in the past 75 years, there have been several areas of success. These include...

COVID-19
VACCINATION
VENUE :
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IMPROVEMENT IN KEY HEALTH AND DEMOGRAPHIC INDICATORS: Life expectancy at birth has risen from 32 years in 1947 to 70.4 years now. We can do much better if the lagging states improve. The maternal mortality rate (MMR) was 2,000 per 100,000 live births in 1947. Now, it is 97, better than the global average of 158. Since 2005, India has showed a 77 per cent decline in MMR, steeper than the 43 per cent at the world level. Infant mortality rate is 28 per 1,000 live births, down from 145 in 1947. Belying fears of uncontrolled population growth, general fertility rate (GFR) has declined by 20 per cent over the past decade and total fertility rate (TFR) has reached 2.0. A sliver of hope for correction of the skewed male to female sex ratio at birth comes with change from 111 to 108 boys per 100 girls (2010-20).

DISEASE ERADICATION: After years of suffering the highest number of smallpox cases, India declared itself free of the dreaded disease in 1979. The World Health Organization (WHO) declared India polio-free in 2014. Guinea worm disease, an affliction in many states, was eradicated in 2000. India was the first country to be officially acknowledged Yaws-free. India achieved its maternal and neonatal tetanus elimination (MNTE) goal in April 2015, ahead of the global target date. Goitre was eliminated in sub-Himalayan regions through salt iodisation.

DISEASE CONTROL: In 1947, India had an estimated 75 million malaria cases, in a population of 330 million. In the past two decades, there has been a decrease from 20 million cases in 2000 to 5.6 million cases in 2019, giving impetus to the goal of malaria eradication by 2030. Leading this decline, Odisha reported 94 per cent reduction in malaria cases between 2016 and 2021. India's management of the HIV-AIDS pandemic has been a remarkable success story. The National AIDS Control Organisation (NACO) partnered with nearly 1,800 civil society organisations. Since the peak of 0.55 per cent of the population in 2000, prevalence has declined to 0.2 per cent. New cases have declined by 46 per cent since 2010. Present level of prevalence

MANEESH AGNIHOTRI

also reflects improved survival due to anti-retroviral therapy (ART). As of 2021, there are around 500 ART centres providing free treatment to 1.5 million people. The government's Swachh Bharat Mission is also enabling disease control by reducing open defecation and promoting sanitary practices.

UNIVERSAL IMMUNISATION: Introduced in 1978 as the Expanded Programme of Immunisation (EPI), it became the Universal Immunisation Programme (UIP) in 1985. Targeting nearly 267 million newborns and 290 million pregnant women a year, it provides 12 vaccines free, with more added as evidence emerges. The programme has helped reduce under-5 child mortality to 32 per 1,000 live births. Special immunisation campaigns such as Mission Indradhanush focus on areas with poor vaccination coverage. India's countrywide mass immunisation programme for Covid-19 vaccines, the largest in the world, leveraged UIP's efficiency.

TOBACCO CONTROL: For decades after Independence, India invested in tobacco cultivation as a commercial crop that earned high revenues. The cost of tobacco-related diseases exceeded those economic returns and the toll of preventable deaths and disease rose steadily. The many forms in which it is consumed in India posed challenges to control strategies. Recognition of the harm caused by active and passive tobacco consumption, coupled with concerted civil society campaigns catalysed enactment of a multi-component tobacco control legislation by Parliament in 2003. India also played an acclaimed leadership role in shaping the global Framework Convention on Tobacco Control at WHO in 2003. Electronic nicotine products (like vaping) and gutkha have, of course, been banned by India. Success of the control programme is reflected in the 42 per cent reduced consumption of any form of tobacco in the 13-15 age group (2009-19) and from 34.6 per cent in 2009-10 to 28.6 per cent in 2016-17 in the 15+ age group.

NATIONAL HEALTH MISSION (NHM): The National Rural Health Mission (NRHM) commenced in 2005 and later added an urban

__1.__ PM Narendra Modi takes the Covid vaccine, Mar. 1, 2020

__2.__ A newborn at BRD Medical College in Gorakhpur, Uttar Pradesh

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SWACHH BHARAT MISSION HAS ENABLED DISEASE CONTROL BY REDUCING OPEN DEFECATION AND PROMOTING SANITARY HABITS

A toilet in Korali village in Haryana, built under the Swachh Bharat mission

GETTY IMAGES

component to become NHM. It provided the platform for delivery of maternal and child health services to many previously underserved areas and integrated other health programmes on the community connected platform. A major innovation was the training and deployment of locally recruited women as accredited social health activists (ASHA). Celebrated as ASHA workers, a million of them are in the forefront of health service delivery in primary care. NHM has been a key driver of decline in maternal and infant mortality since 2005. ASHAs have been recognised with the Global Health Leaders Award-2022 at the World Health Assembly. ASHAs mobilise pregnant women for institutional deliveries, support immunisation programmes, provide iron and folic acid tablets, contraceptive pills and medicines for tuberculosis. They are now being engaged in the detection and control of non-communicable diseases as well as mental health disorders. Several schemes have been launched within the ambit of NHM to improve health services. These include the Janani Suraksha Yojana (JSY), Janani Shishu Suraksha Karyakram (JSSK) and Pradhan Mantri Surakshit Matrutva Abhiyan (PMSMA).

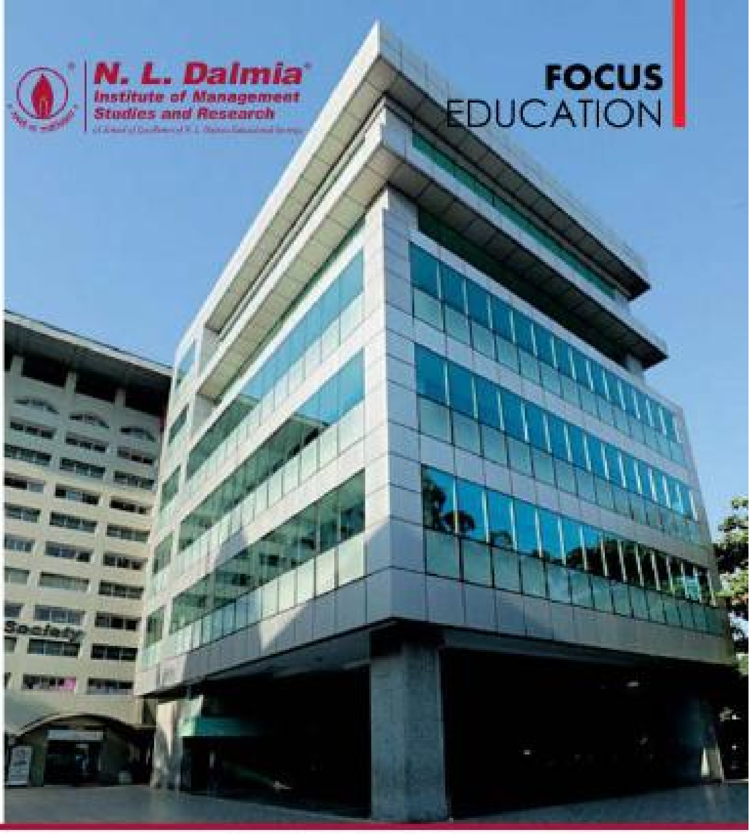
AYUSHMAN BHARAT: Launched in 2018, this has been a major leap in unifying health programmes fragmented by disease-specific approaches and segmented by age groups. Adopting an approach of 'comprehensive primary healthcare' (CPHC), the health and wellness centres (HWCs) cover a wide range of common health conditions. The Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (PMJAY) provides financial protection for hospitalised care to 40 per cent of the population vulnerable to financial shocks. The Health Infrastructure Mission, launched in 2021, and Digital Health Mission strengthen the Ayushman Bharat platform. Enhanced connectivity between these four programmes and their complementarity with state government schemes will advance the journey to universal health coverage (UHC).

ACCESS TO MEDICINES: The switch from product patenting to process patenting in the early 1970s enabled large-scale generic drug production by an energised domestic drug industry. India became the 'pharmacy of the world'. India's export of anti-retroviral drugs to South Africa catalysed a global movement for affordable medicines. Currently, there are over 350 Indian drug manufacturing units endorsed by the European Union and many by US regulators. India is the principal supplier of vaccines for global child immunisation programmes. The prowess of India's pharma sector was also evident during the Covid-19 pandemic, when several vaccines were manufactured in high volume for domestic use and export to 101 countries and UN entities.

ADOPTION OF DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES: Despite a late start, India quickly took up adoption and application of digital technologies. The use of telehealth services has risen rapidly after legal barriers were removed. The CoWIN app was remarkably successful in supporting the large countrywide Covid-19 immunisation programme. Point-of-care diagnostic systems are transforming primary care. Technology-enabled non-physician primary care providers can diagnose and manage hypertension and diabetes, providing continuity of care. Supply chain management is more efficient. Disease surveillance has become real-time. The Ayushman Bharat health account (ABHA) number provides a unique ID to individuals, while a unified health interface (UHI) will connect healthcare providers and create digital highways that will integrate health services across the country and provide portability for medical records.

DIVERSE HEALTH SYSTEMS: Partly due to conviction and partly for convenience, India has decided to adopt medical pluralism for healthcare. While high quality doctors, nurses and allied health professionals were produced by modern systems, traditional systems of medicine, too, have contributed to the healthcare of many Indians. Shortages of doctors and nurses, aggravated by migration to other countries, were partially compensated by practitioners of other systems. Over time, the health-promoting strength of yoga and the holistic approach of Ayurveda are increasingly being appreciated by other countries. India has a great opportunity to use her strengths across several healthcare and healing systems to develop models of integrative medicine that will benefit the world. ■

N. L. DALMIA: SHAPING THE MANAGEMENT CAREERS OF GEN NEXT



Higher education powers the development of society, the economy and the nation. Globalization, urbanization, rising incomes and aspirations, along with an increase in business complexity, has all contributed to an enhanced demand for business managers. The workforce of the future is largely nurtured and shaped by premier management institutes like N L Dalmia.

The N L Dalmia Educational Society was founded more than 40 years ago by the visionary, Shri. Niranjanlalji Dalmia. The modest school that began with 60 students in the year 1991 has metamorphosed into a self-funded college and an Institute of Management Studies and Research. N L Dalmia's Management Institute ranks 23rd out of 8000 institutions in India.

Management education should ensure that learners acquire the precise skills required in a VUCA World. Upskilling is essential for freshers and working professionals. With the latest tech NL Dalmia makes upskilling affordable and accessible even to busy professionals. The institute collaborates closely with the Indian Finance Association (IFA) and selects top-tier IIMs to develop leaders. This reduces the skill gap and equips learners with competency and analytical skills.

N. L. Dalmia's Bloomberg Research Analyst executive program is one of the best in the country. It has the largest Bloomberg lab in south Asia with 24 terminals. Learners gain exposure to international markets, analyse financial markets technically, and gain useful practical experience from real-world situations. With a strong rigorous selection process the PGDM programs in Business Analytics, Finance, HR, and Marketing provide a wide range of opportunities for experiential learning and training. The institute also offers a Phd program affiliated to University of Mumbai.

International alliances and collaborations help students compete on the global stage. N L Dalmia has MoUs with Harvard Business School, Virginia Tech, and the University of Wisconsin. The institute is ISO 9001-2015 certified, approved by AICTE, HRD Ministry Government of India, AIU approved and affiliated to University of Mumbai (Phd Program). It is also accredited to CRISIL, NAAC and NBA at State and National levels.

Chairman Shri Shivkumar Dalmia is the driving force behind the institution. According to him, both professionals and recent graduates must have the necessary skills and values to become tomorrow's leaders, given the rapidly changing dynamics of the workforce. Shri Shailesh Dalmia, the Hon. Secretary has been a big catalyst, working on accreditations, infrastructure improvements and international partnerships.

Prof. Dr. Seema Saini, CEO, has steered the institution to these heights. With 30 years of experience, her credentials include a Ph.D. and multiple master's degrees in Economics and HRD. Open to new concepts, innovation, and collaborations, she has brought in a new dimension. Prof. (Dr.) M.A Khan, Director at NL Dalmia supports her with his expertise in building world-class institutions. An Ex Registrar (University of Mumbai), Ex CEO (HCOI), and part of the Ministry of Minority Affairs Govt. of India, he is a recognized research guide and an Alumnus of IIMA.

A strong alumni network is a sign of any educational institution's success. N L Dalmia's management institution has a 7700+ strong Global Alumni Network that plays an active role in nurturing, guiding, and mentoring current learners. Alumni stay involved with the students through guest sessions, academic advisory boards, and live projects. Along with their strong professional networks, they bring a wealth of knowledge and opportunities to the table. Top-notch organizations are now placement partners. The institute offers placements to all its students who opt for placements assistance, across organizations like KPMG, HDFC, Deloitte, PwC, Tata Motors, Bloomberg, Bain & Co., HUL and many more.

N.L. Dalmia has a strong faculty base of postgraduates from IIT, IIM's and PhD holder's with strong industry experience, They help students develop their leadership skills, through subject matter expertise, development of novel strategies, or mentoring them with industry-specific knowledge. The faculty are updated at periodic development initiatives, conducted by institutions like Harvard Business School.

With affiliations, accreditations, and a strong global alumni network NL Dalmia's Management Institute is the right choice for a promising career ahead.

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47TH ANNIVERSARY

THE BEST OF INDIA

LANDMARK JUDGMENTS

By **GAUTAM BHATIA**

Lawyer and author

THE SPIRIT OF THE LAW

The best moments in Indian judicial history came when the courts looked not at the law but at the first principles of justice—at the oft-unwritten credo that underlies the Constitution

IN **a constitutional democracy governed by the rule of law,** an independent judiciary has a critical role to play. In a country as diverse and heterogeneous as India, and with a career spanning close to 73 years, the Indian judiciary's role has been varied and multi-faceted. It is thus a rather difficult task to compile a list of "10 of the most significant judgments" in Indian constitutional history, as no criterion of selection will be fine-grained enough to command universal agreement. This list, therefore, ought to be treated as an invitation to a conversation, and not a verdict (verdicts, after all, are the business of courts!).

I believe constitutions and constitutionalism are at their best when they interrogate power relations—both state and social—and seek to democratise public and private power. My list brings together 10 judgments that have done that in a rigorous and judicious manner, and therefore, from my perspective, are the

Supreme Court of India

HEMANT CHAWLA

> Constitutions and constitutionalism are at their best when they interrogate power relations—both state and social—and seek to democratise public and private power

most *significant* (I offer that as meaning worthy of study, emulation, further development). This piece should not be read as hagiography: the judiciary's record over the years has been patchy. What this piece seeks to show is those moments when the Constitution—and the courts—have been at their best.

The first of my crown jewels is ***PUDR vs Union of India*** (1982), a Supreme Court judgment that dealt with the use of bonded labour in construction projects for the 1982 Asiad in Delhi. Among other things, in *PUDR* (Peoples Union for Democratic Rights), the court held that the right against forced labour, guaranteed under Article 23 of the Constitution, included a right to a minimum wage, enforceable against a private employer; this was because nobody working below a minimum wage could be said to be truly 'free'. The court's closely reasoned judgment broke new ground in understanding concepts of force and freedom in the context of unequal power relations between capitalists and labourers.

Sticking with the theme of private power, ***Indian Medical Association vs Union of India*** (2011) is an SC judgment that held that Article 15(2) of the Constitution—which guarantees non-discriminatory access to wells, ghats and places of public resort—had to be read as a broad *anti-boycott* provision that prohibited the practice of caste (and other forms of social) boycotts. The court essentially read into the Constitution a civil rights guarantee that in many countries has taken decades to codify. Social boycotts were also the focus of

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TOP 10 RULINGS

1. **PUDR vs Union of India** *1982*
2. **IMA vs Union of India** *2011*
3. **The Dawoodi Bohra Case (dissent)** *1962*
4. **Naz Foundation vs NCT of Delhi** *2009*
5. **Joseph Shine vs Union of India** *2018*
6. **State of Kerala vs N.M. Thomas** *1975*
7. **Selvi vs State** *2010*
8. **Asif Iqbal Tanha vs State of NCT of Delhi** *2021*
9. **T. Sareetha vs Venkatasubbaiah** *1983*
10. **K.S. Puttaswamy vs Union of India** *2017*

Chief Justice B.P. Sinha's dissenting judgment in the ***Dawoodi Bohra Case*** (1962) where, against four of his colleagues, the Chief Justice held that an anti-excommunication law was constitutional despite allegedly infringing upon the freedom of religion, as it was designed to safeguard an individual's civil rights from his/ her *own* community. That fundamental insight would be reaffirmed more than 50 years later, when Maharashtra passed an anti-social boycott law in 2016.

Unsurprisingly, the cases above involve fundamental questions around equality, in a society that continues to be stratified and discriminatory along multiple axes. Often, this discrimination is written into law, and there have been long struggles against such laws. A classic example of the courts acting to further the principle of equality even against codified law is the Delhi High Court's judgment in ***Naz Foundation vs NCT of Delhi*** (2009), which first decriminalised same-sex relations on the touchstone of equality, non-discrimination, human dignity and the right to health. *Naz Foundation* was reversed by the Supreme Court in 2013 in *Koushal vs Naz*, but ultimately resurrected just five years later, in *Navtej Johar vs Union of India*. Along with *Navtej Johar*, the high court judgment remains a model of inspiring clarity on fundamental issues of equality before the law. At around the same time as *Navtej Johar*, the SC also decriminalised adultery in ***Joseph Shine vs Union of India*** (2018). The significance of *Joseph Shine* lies in the fact that it is the most rigorous and detailed examination of gender discrimination under the Constitution by a court; the SC drew upon a range of arguments to hold that laws based on gendered stereotypes, and laws that had the effect of entrenching substantive gender disadvantage, were unconstitutional.

Entrenched disadvantage was also at the heart of the SC's judgment in ***State of Kerala vs N.M. Thomas*** (1975), arguably India's best reservation judgment. For the first time, the SC held that Article 16(4) of the Constitution—which authorised reservations—was not to be understood as an exception to the rule of equality, but rather, as an emphatic restatement of it. In other words, Indian constitutionalism was committed to a *substantive* vision of equality, which took into account entrenched and existing group disadvantages, and sought to overcome them.

B.R. Ambedkar once described liberty, equality and fraternity as the holy trinity that underlay the Constitution. The judgments above have discussed issues around fraternity and equality; but what of liberty, or human freedom? In ***Selvi vs State*** (2010), the SC considered the position of the individual at his or her most vulnerable against the state: in a police station. The court held that certain interrogation techniques such as narco-analysis and brain-mapping were unconstitutional, as they violated the right against self-incrimination and the right to mental privacy; the court, thus, put fetters on what the state could do to people, and claim to do it righteously, in the name of crime-fighting. This was also at the heart of the Delhi High Court's judgment in ***Asif Iqbal Tanha vs State of NCT of Delhi*** (2021), where the court granted bail to three individuals imprisoned under the draconian UAPA, by refusing to act as a post-office for the police, and by subjecting the state's case to close scrutiny (upon which it fell apart). In an age in which the UAPA is being increasingly weaponised to keep dissidents in jail without trial, the Delhi High Court here demonstrated the importance of a Constitution, and an independent judiciary, as a check upon authoritarianism.

Freedom and equality are complementary, and nowhere is this more evident than in the Andhra Pradesh High Court's judgment in ***T. Sareetha vs Venkatasubbaiah*** (1983), which examined privacy and the public/ private divide from the perspective of women's equality and freedom. The court struck down the 'restitution of conjugal rights'—which penalises spouses who have 'unreasonably withdrawn themselves from the company' of the other spouse—as violating the fundamental right to decisional autonomy and intimate choice. Although *Sareetha* was overturned by the SC shortly after, it was vindicated in 2017 in the case that rounds off this selection: ***K.S. Puttaswamy vs Union of India*** (2017), or the 'right to privacy' case. The nine-judge bench's restatement of the right to privacy under the Indian Constitution is also a restatement of Indian *constitutionalism*, and sets the foundation for a progressive and transformative jurisprudence (much of which, of course, remains a work in progress).

These 10 cases—in a sense, brought together and summed up in *Puttaswamy*—show Indian constitutionalism and the judiciary at their best: a constitutionalism that questions, interrogates and democratises power, within the constitutional frameworks of liberty, equality and fraternity. ■

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INDIANOIL: STEERING INDIA'S GREEN AGENDA FORWARD

IndianOil shares its extensive plans to achieving Net Zero Operational emissions by 2046: In conversation with Mr Shrikant Madhav Vaidya, Chairman, IndianOil.

- **How is IndianOil aiming to contribute to India's Net Zero journey?**

As the Energy of India, IndianOil is committed to catalysing the country's ambitious journey to reach Net Zero emissions by 2070. Underlining that commitment, IndianOil has resolved to achieve the Net Zero Operational emissions by 2046 (Scope I & II). We are investing over Rs 2 trillion in phases across various initiatives covering the entirety of our operations, particularly in our refineries. IndianOil is focusing on greener avenues of renewable energy, green hydrogen, City Gas Distribution, Compressed Biogas, and Electric Vehicles. Beyond these endeavours, let me underscore our optimism about the groundbreaking biofuel forays poised to utilise India's agricultural waste and residue to offer new-age sustainable energy solutions, thereby boosting rural India's socioeconomic growth journey. Landmark projects like Asia's first 2G (second generation) ethanol bio-refinery and world's first 3G ethanol Plant using refinery off-gases are in the advanced stages of commissioning. We are also investing heavily in R&D to find new and innovative ways to reduce our emissions and improve our environmental performance.

- **Can you elaborate on IndianOil's Green products line up?**

At IndianOil, we believe green innovations are quintessential in delighting modern eco-sensitive customers, and our futuristic product bouquet reflects that belief. I am proud of how we have been able to blend environment consciousness even in the traditional offerings while enhancing product performance. Eco-friendly diesel XtraGreen, green engine oil SERVO Greenmile, and ultra-premium high octane petrol variants like XP95 & XP100 not only boost the vehicle performance of vehicles but also reduce emissions significantly. On the LPG front, Indane XTRATEJ offers greater efficiency and significant savings. And these innovative solutions are winning hearts and earning accolades at every level. For instance, our in-house Green Combo Solution, comprising XtraGreen Diesel and green lubricants, was awarded the National Energy Efficiency Innovation Award by the Bureau of Energy Efficiency (BEE).

- **How do you plan to make IndianOil's business operations more environmentally friendly and efficient?**

At IndianOil, Refining forms the central core of our operations, and we are committed to making our refineries greener, more efficient and increasingly reliable. To begin with, we are using more gas in our furnaces and for the generation of hydrogen to reduce our carbon footprint. We are also investing in green hydrogen plants at our refineries in Mathura and Panipat. These plants will help us further reduce our emissions and contribute to a cleaner environment.

IndianOil is also working to minimise its water footprint in mission mode. The upcoming first-of-its-kind Sewage Treatment Plants (STPs) in Mathura and Gujarat will recycle wastewater to cater to water requirements in refinery operations. The Gujarat plant is at an advanced stage of completion, and soon we will replicate this PPP-based STP model in other IndianOil refineries.

Please tell us about some of IndianOil's endeavors to protect India's biodiversity.

For us, going green is a comprehensive promise that extends much beyond the realms of operations. For instance, our Refineries boast of an extensive green belt of about 900 hectares that shelter an incredibly diverse variety of flora and fauna. We played a leading role in reintroducing the majestic cheetah in India. On the national scale, we are working closely with the National Tiger Conservation Authority to advance the historic Cheetah Reintroduction Project that has brought back the majestic cheetah to Indian soil after seven decades of its extinction. As part of this project, we will contribute about Rs 50 crore over five years for various components, including Cheetah Introduction, Habitat Management & Protection, Eco Development, Staff Training and Veterinary Healthcare.

Last year, as a mark of our green commitment, IndianOil adopted the Great Indian Single-Horned Rhino as our brand mascot, and we are leaving no stone unturned to catalyse Rhino conservation efforts in India. IndianOil has adopted 24 Indian single-horned rhinos at nine zoos across the country, providing them with the resources they need to live happy and healthy lives. We have also undertaken mangrove plantations in 100 hectares of Marine National Park near Narara Bet (Vadinar), Gujarat, to help shore up the fragile coastal ecosystem.

Then, IndianOil partnered with the Wildlife departments of Tamil Nadu and Odisha to protect the Olive Ridley Turtle eggs in artificial hatcheries. And in a landmark endeavour, we successfully undertook the challenging project of translocating corals when replacing our pipelines in the Gujarat coastal belt in Vadinar in partnership with the Zoological Survey of India. IndianOil is also supporting elephant rehabilitation in Mathura, Uttar Pradesh, in partnership with Wildlife SOS and has supported the construction of an elephant enclosure and essential bathing pond at the Wildlife SOS Elephant Conservation and Care Centre (ECCC) Tatrotha, Mathura. Furthermore, we have partnered with the Sundarban Tiger Conservation Foundation Trust (STCFT) to support the modernisation of patrolling in Sundarban Tiger Reserve to protect the Royal Bengal Tiger.

Let me add that IndianOil is committed to exploring more avenues for strengthening our national ecological heritage.

INDIANOIL'S TOP 10 ENVIRONMENTAL INITIATIVES

↗ HYDROGEN FUEL

Refineries are the major consumption centres for hydrogen. The current hydrogen production process is highly carbon-intensive. Thus, IndianOil will set up a 5 KTA (40 MW) Green Hydrogen plant at Mathura Refinery and a 2 KTA (16 MW) Green Hydrogen plant at Panipat Refinery. Also, India's first hydrogen dispensing station of 1.5 TPD has been set up in Gujarat by IndianOil, which can fuel up to 75 buses per day.

↗ 2G ETHANOL PLANT AT PANIPAT

Asia's first 2G (second generation) ethanol bio-refinery, the IndianOil 2G Ethanol Plant in Panipat, will help cut down about three lakh Metric Tonnes of GHG (Greenhouse Gas) emission every year and will produce three crore litres of ethanol per annum by utilising about 2 lakh tonnes of paddy straw. It will also help in reducing air pollution caused because of stubble burning in Northern India.

↗ CITY GAS DISTRIBUTION NETWORK

IndianOil, along with its JV companies, is now present in 49 Geographical Areas in 105 districts spread across 21 states/UTs, making it one of the most significant CGD players in the country.

↗ COMPRESSED BIOGAS

IndianOil has become the first company in India to sell CBG under the Indigreen brand to customers through 39 retail outlets in 9 states. IndianOil has awarded 2636 LOIs for 6.5 MMTPA CBG production capacity under the ambitious SATAT (Sustainable Alternative Towards Affordable Transportation) scheme on CBG (Compressed Biogas).

↗ GREENER OPERATIONS, RENEWABLE VENTURES

- Enhancing operational reliability and efficiency by round-the-clock Remote turbine monitoring.
- Scaling up renewable capacity from today's 240 MW to nearly 5 GW by 2046.
- IndianOil has installed solar power units in over 20,258 retail outlets (~60% of its total outlets; up to Nov' 22)
- Setting up a dedicated Centre for Alternative & Renewable Energy (i-CARE) at its new R&D campus.
- Partnered with NTPC to source renewable power to meet the electricity requirements (650 MW) for its approved refinery expansions.

↗ ELECTRIC VEHICLE CHARGING STATIONS AND BATTERY TECHNOLOGY

- Setting up 10,000 EV charging stations by 2023-24. (Already set up over 3400 EV charging stations and Battery Swapping Stations at its Fuel Stations).
- Formed a JV with Israeli company Phinergy Limited, IOC Phinergy Private Limited, to commercialise the Aluminium- Air Battery technology in India.

↗ GREEN PRODUCT BOUQUET

Roll out of products with improved efficiency and lower carbon footprint, developed with in-house technologies, such as 100 Octane premium petrol XP100, high octane XP95, XtraGreen Diesel and Green lubricants, including SERVO Greenmile and SERVO Raftaar.

↗ PROTECTION OF BIODIVERSITY

a. Fuelling the Cheetah Translocation Project in collaboration with NTCA.
b. Adoption of Rhinos across Zoos in India.
c. Translocation of Corals at Vadinar, Gujarat.
d. Construction of Enclosure for Rehabilitation of Elephants at Mathura.
e. Support for the conservation of the Royal Bengal Tiger at Sunderban Tiger Reserve.
f. Plantation of Mangroves at Vadinar, Gujarat and Haldia in West Bengal to help shore up the fragile coastal ecosystem.

↗ UNBOTTLED-RECYCLING OF PET BOTTLES INTO GARMENTS

IndianOil launched a special "sustainable & green" uniform for its 5 lakh Fuel Station Attendants; Indane LPG Gas delivery personnel, and other special sections of stakeholders. The dress materials are made from recycled polyester derived from used PET bottles, which supports recycling about 2,000 tonnes of PET bottles per year, equivalent to offsetting over 20 million bottles.

↗ REDUCING WATER FOOTPRINT OF INDIANOIL REFINERIES:

Upcoming first-of-its-kind Sewage Treatment Plants (STPs) in IndianOil's Gujarat and Mathura Refineries will recycle wastewater for the Company's refineries, reducing the need for fresh water. These STPs, built on the PPP model, will soon to be replicated at other IndianOil Refineries.

Pernod Ricard India Striving for a Sustainable Future

#OneForOurPlanet

We live in a world that is constantly evolving, from climate change to brimming sea levels to overflowing waste pits/landfills. Climate change is one of the most pertinent issues of the present times. Human activities have contributed to increasing greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere, leading to long-term shifts in temperatures and weather patterns. A familiar reference would be the enormous waste generated by the current models of production and consumption. The bulk of this waste ends up in landfills. By 2050, India for example would need a landfill the size of Delhi to house its urban waste. Though the representation strikes as alarming, it serves to highlight the issue at hand.

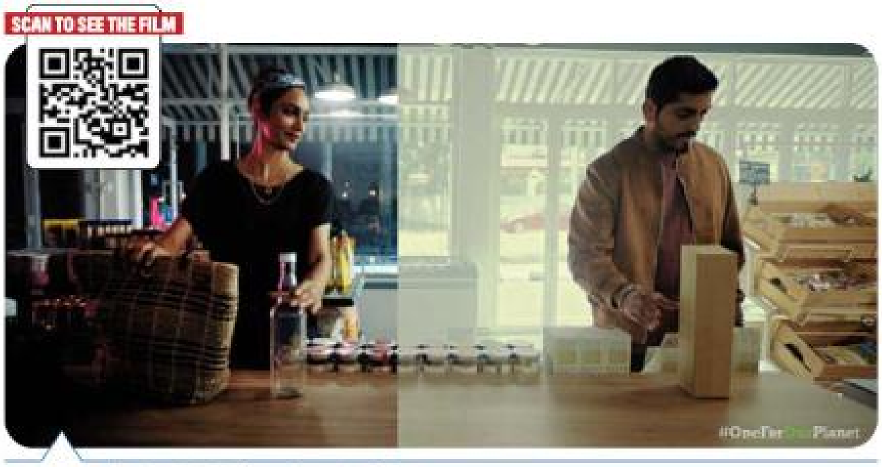
A pressing need is felt therefore to take timely actions to prevent further destruction. The first step in taking control of the situation involves acknowledging the gravity of the challenge. A solution to this problem can only be arrived at if the various entities come together and take concrete steps towards a better tomorrow.

In line with this ideology, global leader in wine and spirits, Pernod Ricard India has taken one such step with its industry-first initiative '#OneForOurPlanet'. The initiative sets in motion the removal of permanent mono cartons from the packaging.

As the company unveiled the new campaign film on 7th December 2022 in Mumbai, there was a joyous echo of support and vigor to turn a new leaf in the company's sustainability roadmap.

Mr. Ranjeet Oak, Chief Commercial Officer reiterated that this initiative is a small step in minimizing the company's overall carbon footprint. He proclaimed "*With the successful roll out of this initiative, we will reduce carbon emissions of 7,310 tonnes every year, save 2.5 lakh trees, and reduce waste-to-landfill by 18,745 tons. While this is significant, but not enough, we still have a long way to go!*"

SCAN TO SEE THE FILM



A still from the #OneForOurPlanet Campaign film

Integrating sustainable practices from grain to glass

The last decade witnessed the Food and Beverage industry in India evaluating its impact on the environment and integrating sustainable practices in their businesses.

As an organization of purpose, Pernod Ricard India works towards an enriched value chain that is committed to supporting the UN Sustainable Development Goals, ensuring its business is aligned with the 'World's to-do list' to help reach prosperity for the planet and its people.

Ms. Yashika Singh, EVP – Corporate Affairs, Communications, S&R and CSR

Pernod Ricard
Seagram India
ONE FOR OUR PLANET
#OneForOurPlanet

Pernod Ricard India's Executive Vice President - Corporate Affairs, Communications, S&R and CSR, Yashika Singh; Chief Marketing Officer, Kartik Mohindra; Chief Commercial Officer, Ranjeet Oak and Vice President – Manufacturing, Gagandeep Sethi, discussing the overall impact of #OneForOurPlanet at the event held in Mumbai

Pernod Ricard
Seagram India
ONE FOR OUR PLANET
#OneForOurPlanet

mentioned that #OneForOurPlanet is a step in the direction of Pernod Ricard India's strong carbon agenda. "*With a commitment to minimize waste at every step of the company's value chain, we continue to produce and distribute our products in ways that optimize and help preserve natural resources, reduce carbon footprint and minimize waste contribution to landfills*" added Ms. Singh.

OneForOurPlanet is not just an initiative, it's a movement towards a better tomorrow

Consumer centricity is at the heart of Pernod Ricard India's business and no campaign or initiative is successful without their support.

"This is a bold but necessary step!" said Mr. Kartik Mohindra, Chief Marketing Officer, Pernod Ricard India, as he assured everyone that removal of the permanent mono-carton will not impact the product in any way and that he is positive that the consumers will accept and advocate this change.

The company aims to inspire consumers to become advocates of this cause and help them translate the initiative into a larger movement. The company arrived at the decision based on deliberations and pilot projects for testing consumer behavior. Pernod Ricard India aims to bring together 'responsible retailing' and 'responsible consumption' practices and inspire consumers to make eco-conscious decisions.

"*The world has entered a new era of sustainability and we are catering to consumers who are becoming increasingly eco-conscious. They are seeking brands and products that bolster a sustainable impact on the environment and planet at large. As a responsible corporate citizen present in India for over 25 years, sustainability is key to Pernod Ricard India's operations and our new campaign #OneForOurPlanet is a testament to our commitment,*" added Mr. Mohindra.

To further help consumers navigate their way and support this initiative, the company has attached neck tags to the bottle that leads to a micro-site solely created for #OneForOurPlanet.

Mr. Gagandeep Singh, VP - Manufacturing testified that the movement goes beyond removing mono-cartons. "*100 percent of the packaging will be made recyclable, compostable, or reusable by 2025, and 40 per cent recycled glass content by the same year will be deployed,*" added Mr. Sethi

Apart from this, the recently concluded event hosted by Pernod Ricard India offered a glimpse into a greener world with its forest-themed décor where each and every element was eco-conscious and recyclable. What also caught everyone's attention was a dedicated wall of succulents and art made with dried flowers. The glass water bottles subtly arranged on the table stood substitutes to the usual plastic ones. Additionally, placed in strategic spaces around the room were separate bins for recyclable waste and food waste. The company also promised to share the leftover food with an NGO.

The company's commitment to the cause of waste reduction was also evident in the choices made for its event. The musical show featured a famed percussionist and his team who didn't just cast a spell with their beats but also left the guests inspired with their use of discarded items, such as trash cans, old buckets, old glasses and used wood in their performance.

Pernod Ricard
Seagram India
ONE FOR OUR PLANET
#OneForOurPlanet

Seen in this photo L-R: Ranjeet Oak, Kartik Mohindra, Yashika Singh and Gagandeep Sethi unveil industry-first initiative #OneForOurPlanet

While Pernod Ricard India is leading by example, it cannot save the planet alone. Join in and help create a chance at a better planet and a better world.

47TH ANNIVERSARY

THE BEST OF INDIA

ENVIRONMENT INITIATIVES

THE GREEN ROAD TO PROGRESS

By SUNITA NARAIN

Director-General, Centre for Science and Environment, Delhi

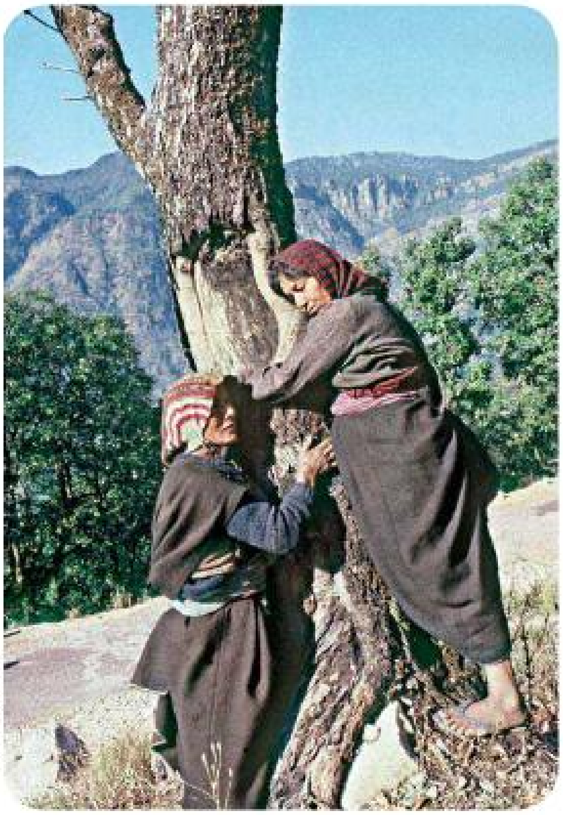
In 75 years of independent India, the environment movement has played an important role in shaping policy and defining the practice of development. The movement has taken three distinct tracks through which we can highlight the changemakers. First, where environmental action played a role in defining the development strategy for natural resource management. Second, where action has opposed development projects and, from this contestation, a new consensus has emerged in terms of action. Third, where the environment movement has pushed and prodded change in policy when it comes to issues of pollution and human health.

The 'nature' of the movement is complex. Not only because there are separate ideologies that drive environmentalism in the country, but also because there are differences in class. For instance, in the past 75 years, India's environment movement has been deeply divided on the practice of environment as development and/ or conservation.

This schism started even at the very birth, in the 1970s. On the one hand, the country launched Project Tiger to identify land for sanctuaries for this flagship species, a programme based on the western concept of conservation. At roughly the same time, poor women in the high Himalayas launched the Chipko movement, where they resisted the axe of the woodcutters. Their movement, though, was not about conservation but an assertion of self-determination—they needed the trees for their survival, and so wanted the right to cut them or grow them. This difference has played out in policy over the past 75 years as it vacillated between extraction of natural resources like forests, and conservation. And in this, the right of communities to manage local natural resources has not been realised. Given these inherent contradictions, it is nearly impossible to call out the most important environment initiatives of the past 75 years. I will leave it to you, discerning reader, to ponder upon the significance of the ones chosen here.

Chipko movement

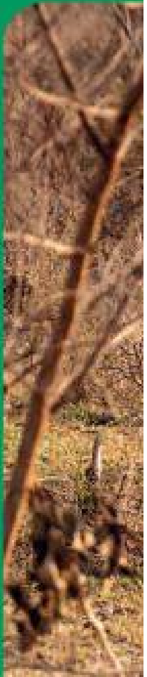
Women in Reni village, in present-day Uttarakhand, made national news in 1974 as they stopped felling of trees. Their movement inspired the country to give importance to forest conservation and afforestation. Today, however, the question is how forests can be grown and then cut and then grown again so that India can move towards a wood-based economy.



BHAWAN SINGH

Project Tiger (and its evolution as the National Tiger Conservation Authority)

Things reached their lowest point in 2004 when all the tigers in Rajasthan's Sariska national park were lost to poachers. The Tiger Task Force then set up an agenda for reform, which included strengthening protection of the reserves and also relocation of villages located in the core of the sanctuaries. According to the updated scientific methodology used for census, the numbers of tigers found in the wild have stabilised. However, questions remain in terms of how local communities who co-exist in the same lands will benefit from this conservation effort.



CHANDRADEEP KUMAR

जहां जमीन डूबी
हमारी,
पानी, मछली कैसे
तुम्हारी?
चेतावनी

Narmada movement

To 'stop' the construction of dams (and the resultant loss of forests) and to ensure rehabilitation of villagers it displaced. Those were the concerns of the Narmada Bachao Andolan (NBA), which started in 1985. As revered as it was reviled, the NBA underscored the need to find a balance between the environment and development in policy and then, most importantly, in practice. The latter, though, is still a work in progress.

Bhopal gas tragedy and its aftermath

Lakhs of people suffered in this horrific industrial disaster in December 1984. Many suffer its impact even today. The tragedy led to improvement in legislations to combat industrial accidents as well as the preparedness of companies to avert such disasters. The bigger tragedy is that the victims continue to suffer. Justice has still not been done.

PANKAJ TIWARI

DOW SHALL ASSUME
LIABILITIES FOR THE
CONTINUTING
DISASTER IN BHOPAL

INDIA PICTURE

Reinventing water management with communities

Learning from traditional water management systems to upscale decentralised and community-based water conservation projects in the country has led to a change in policy towards regeneration of local water bodies as a means to improve livelihoods. The initiative has also spurred nationwide action by people to protect and manage water.

ANI

Fighting for the right to clean air in Delhi

The national capital leapfrogged to cleaner fuel, compressed natural gas (CNG) thanks to this initiative in the late 1990s. The improvements in the quality of fuel and technology helped bring down pollution levels at the time. However, as vehicle numbers grew and combustion with dirty fuel continued, air pollution returned to haunt Delhi and other regions with a vengeance. The good news is that there is widespread anguish against pollution and its impact on our health.

GETTY IMAGES

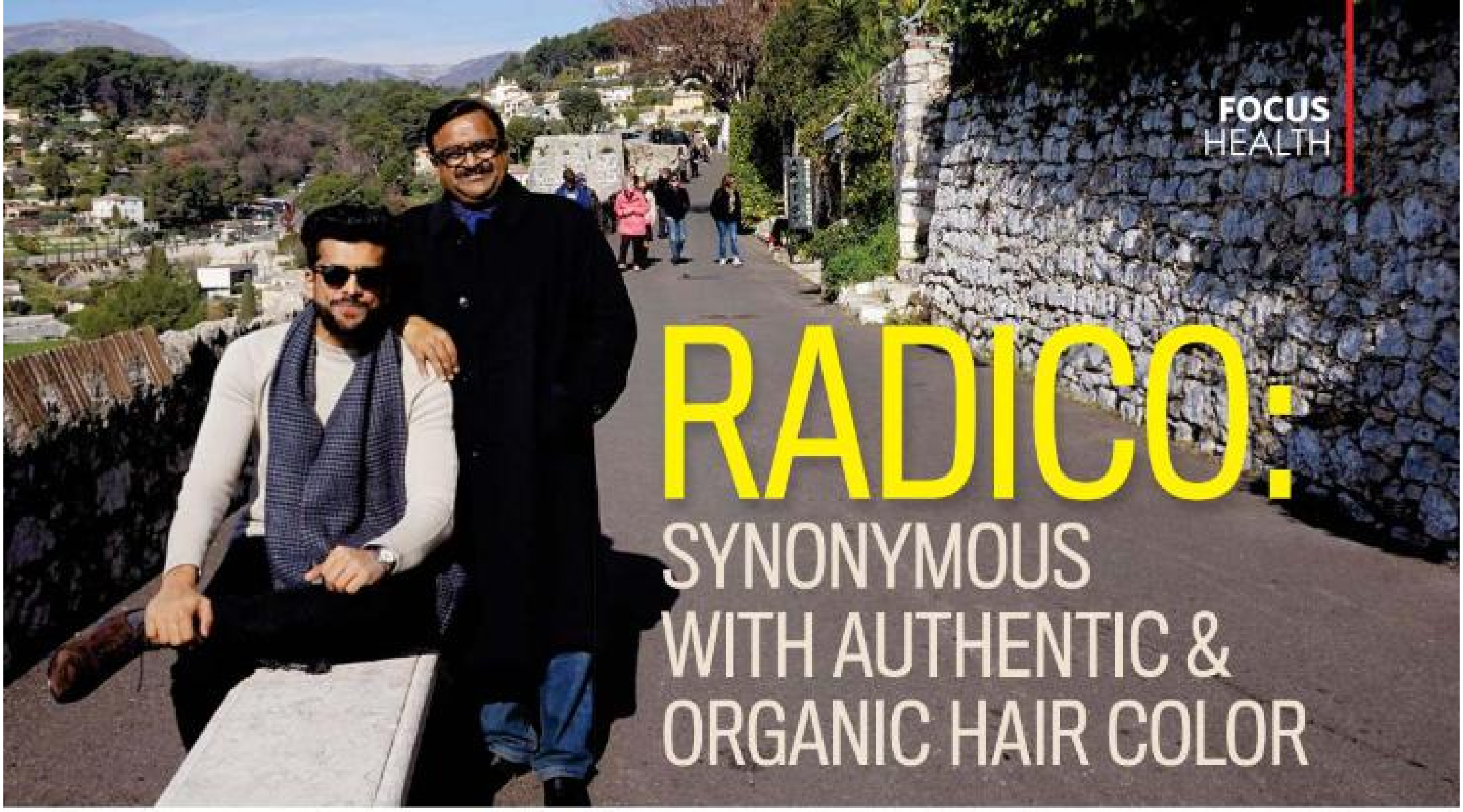
Cleaning the Ganga

This programme started in the mid-1980s with the simple idea that sewage be intercepted and treated before being discharged into the river. But soon it was found that a majority of the households in the country were not connected to official sewage systems. So, policy needed to be inventive to design affordable and inclusive sewage systems. This is now taking shape and it will be good to track its success in coming years.

INDIA PHOTO

Managing garbage in cities to make it a resource

Many cities in the country are today segregating solid waste at the household level and using this to optimise on resource recovery, including generation of gas to fuel vehicles and to provide manure. This practice of a circular economy shows us the way ahead on many environmental issues.



RADICO:
SYNONYMOUS WITH AUTHENTIC & ORGANIC HAIR COLOR

The market for 100% organic or natural products is not just a rapidly growing market today but such products are the need of the hour considering the continuous scientific research that shows us how the use of strong chemical substances can adversely affect health and lead to life threatening diseases like cancer. Consequently, the world is looking for products that are safe, natural, organic, environment friendly, and cruelty free. Recognizing this growing demand, Prof. Sanjeev Bhatt, the CEO and Founder of Radico, has decided to initiate the expansion of their 30+ year old venture Radico that produces 100% natural and organic hair coloring and cosmetic products across the world.

Radico hair color is a well-known and trusted brand in the area of hair coloring and cosmetic products that delivers unique and scientifically tested and approved products that go through stringent checks to ensure excellent quality and safe products. Radico hair color products are tested in laboratories in California and France and the product is certified by the ECO-CERT, France's number one certifying authority for organic products. The products do not use any synthetic additives and are not tested on animals making them absolutely safe and cruelty free.

CONQUERING THE WORLD

Delivering 100% safe, organic and natural products worldwide can lead to supply chain issues wherein product delivery might be delayed and products can become costlier. Initially, the company's operations were located in India where the availability of farmers growing organic products is limited. However, Radico hair color has effectively managed this challenge with their enterprising abilities and expertise by expanding on not only supply chain, but also initiating cultivation and production of their organic herbs and manufacturing of natural products throughout the world. They have recently set up organic farming and processing factories in Central America, Madagascar & France to cover the American continent, Africa and Europe. After years of research, the company identified these regions with soil and environmental conditions suitable for cultivation of the required herbs. These units are in addition to the base in Japan which has been functional for decades now, handling business in the Asia Pacific region. Radico hair color products have truly won hearts worldwide and their numerous products are available across 100+ countries.

Another major step in their business expansion and dedication to consumer interests has been their innovation and adding up other safe and organic products beyond their popular and vibrant hair colors in ten shades. Constantly experimenting and innovating, Radico hair color has tried to revolutionize the market with unique products such as an organic shampoo in soap bar shape that is environment and skin-friendly as it is completely organic and saves water both during production and usage. Made with natural products, it is safe even for children. They are also launching coloured cosmetics like lipsticks that are also absolutely natural and organic.

WALKING A STEP AHEAD ALWAYS

Prof. Sanjeev Bhatt started this venture against many hurdles in the beginning but the company has grown exponentially due to his commitment and strong ethics. Radico hair color believes in honesty, integrity and a deep concern about society. This shows across various verticals in the future vision of the company.

Krishna Bhatt, Head Operations, the son of Prof. Sanjeev Bhatt has a graduate degree in Electronics and Communications Engineering and a Post Graduate degree in Business strategy and Entrepreneurship from Cardiff University, UK.

He is a futuristic entrepreneur, has a dedicated plan for taking Radico Hair Color further ahead and preparing it for the next generation. He is looking after the technological advancements and social media initiatives for Radico Hair Color keeping it abreast with the dynamic market needs. Moreover, Radico hair color is also planning to launch an IPO in the next four years.

The company believes in decentralization of their powers so that everyone feels welcomed as an equal contributor. Prof. Bhatt is a firm believer in good deeds and is devoted to working for the society's benefits.

TAKING EVERYONE ALONG

Radico hair color's devotion to the society and commitment towards honesty and integrity finds reflection in the company's behavior towards its employees. At Radico hair color, employees are offered ample infrastructural conveniences like air-conditioned rooms, a good working environment, and salaries above market rates. The company follows 8 hour work day policy encouraging its employees to leave on time to help them maintain work-life balance. The company also has a 90% population of female employees. It fosters a sense of belongingness that ensures high employee retention and job satisfaction. As an added benefit, Radico hair color also sponsors the education of one child of each of their employees.

This kind of a work environment and ethics have contributed in the company's stellar growth story as Prof Sanjeev Bhatt mentions, "believe in yourself and always give back to society. I strongly believe in the karma theory - all good karma multiplies many folds." It is with this vision that the company continues to scale new heights and delivers excellent, safe, environment friendly, cruelty free products that are sustainable for all stakeholders and consumers.

No.-27
ORGANIC

INDIA PICTURE

Linking regenerative agriculture to farmers' income and human nutrition

In this initiative, growing food does not add to toxification of the soil because of overuse of pesticide and chemical fertilisers but instead adds to the income of farmers through reduction in cost of inputs and/ or improved prices of produce. This goes beyond the idea of organic agriculture, which has captured the imagination of the rich in the country but does little to address the prospect of agrarian distress and malnutrition.

AFP

I VOTE FOR TIBET
CLIMATE ACTION
TIBETANS ARE ON THE FRONTLINE OF CLIMATE CRISIS
This Planet is getting hotter than
GLOBAL CLIMATE STRIKE
GLOBAL CLIMATE STRIKE

Citizens' movements

This is the biggest highlight of the country's environment movement. It is often viewed as obstructionist or unnecessary but the clamour of voices has been loudest in the fight to protect the environment and to find ways of regenerating it and building livelihoods from its management. This is the soul of the movement. Environmentalism is about the deepening of democracy, it's not a techno-fix.

Web 3.0 Calling and Chand can help you say Hello!

CHAND METAVERSE

Bootstrapped startups to Marquee Stalwarts to Fortune 500s, innumerable native Web 2.0 brands are rushing to announce their arrival into the Web 3.0 landscape, while others are still trying to get a hang of what it takes to get it right. With emerging new-age technologies come new challenges. Realising the potential of evolution is just the first step. Diving deep into technical capabilities that are prerequisites for building a Web 3.0 product or service is non-negotiable but why would an FMCG company hire techies from numerous streams to bring their vision to life rather than focusing on their expertise? Therefore, Chand Innovation Labs brings you the solution.

Your Vision, Our Expertise

Chand's world-renowned technology stack facilitates the entry of Web 2.0 brands into Web 3.0 by allowing brands to customise their metaversal environments based on their requirements and deliver highly immersive AR/VR/XR and MR experiences to their customers or users like never before. The same floats new-age avenues for brands to engage Millennials and GenZ. Having powered the World's First Metaverse-as-a-Service platform, Chand Innovation Labs is now gearing up to onboard brands across a wide range of industries and set the tone for establishing India as a Web 3.0 heavyweight and a force to be reckoned with.

Scan the QR code to experience the dome in AR

Establishing global Digital Identity standards through customisable Avatars

How about a World's First for Proof of Concept?

The World's First Metaverse-as-a-Service platform, Metapolis, Co-Founded by the two founders of Chand Innovation Labs, Mohan Kuldeep Ponnada and Rama Krishna Kattekola, along with Sandra Helou who previously worked as Head of Metaverse and NFTs at Zilliqa and Max Kantelia is underpinned by Chand's proprietary tech stack and is building the Metaverses of 3 of the top 10 Esports teams in the world. Apart from Ninjas in Pajamas, Mad Lions and RRQ, Metapolis recently announced its collaboration with Rare Antiquities & Rare FND. The brand is building the Rare City that will be home to museums, galleries and a plethora of other highly intriguing assets.

The Brain-Matters

Having understood the core expertise of Chand, it is essential to get to know the brains behind this world-class offering. Co-Founder and CEO, Mohan Kuldeep Ponnada and Co-Founder and COO, Rama Krishna Kattekola are thought leaders in the global Web 3.0 space and they envision positioning the Indian sub-continent as an innovation hub for the world to look at. Mohan was recently named the Blockchain Visionary of the Year by Entrepreneur Dubai and one would have to say that this is just the beginning.

Mohan Kuldeep Ponnada
Founder & CEO, Chand Innovation Labs & Co-Founder & CEO, Metapolis

"The Metaverse is inevitable and brands should accept that sooner than later. The fundamental difference between Web 2.0 and Web 3.0 is the fact that the former connects devices while the latter connects people. This new-age economy will be driven by immersive experiences that brands can extend to their respective users and the best way to do it is through the Metaverse. We at Chand are pioneering the transition of Web 2.0 brands by facilitating their entry into the Metaverse using our tech expertise and are excited to embark on a journey to the top of the Web 3.0 globe."

Rama Krishna Kattekola
Co-Founder & COO, Chand Innovation Labs & Co-Founder & COO, Metapolis

"Our team size has doubled in the last few months and is bound to grow further as we gear up for an exciting 2023. Apart from the use cases & the technological evolutions that power the Web 3.0 economy, one should also consider the potential of this sector when it comes to creating opportunities for talented professionals. We are sitting on a Trillion Dollar opportunity and Bharat has all it will take to evolve as a Web 3.0 Superpower. We at Chand take pride in leading the charge at the global level."

THE DS GROUP
WALKING THE TALK

Rajiv Kumar
Vice Chairman, DS Group

Leading the way to a greener future

The DS Group is a shining example of an Indian organization that is committed to a sustainable ecosystem, and makes a significant contribution to the world through its environmental initiatives.

The environment is everyone's responsibility.

We have all learned this the hard way. Climate change and the state of the very basics of our lives – air, water and soil— have been threatened by decades of thoughtless consumption.

Currently, roughly half of worlds ~8 billion people are estimated to experience severe water scarcity for at least some part of the year due to climatic and non-climatic factors. During the last two decades, the global glacier mass loss rate exceeded 0.5 meters water equivalent per year, impacting humans and ecosystems. Agriculture and energy production have been impacted by changes in the hydrological cycle. Between 1983 and 2009, approximately three-quarters of the global harvested areas experienced yield losses induced by drought, with the cumulative production losses corresponding to USD 166 billion. (Source: IPCC_AR6_WGII_)

The impact is being experienced on a global, planetary scale, and directly within our homes and communities. A thriving and healthy environment is a non-negotiable imperative and it is critical today to work towards sustainability and environmental well-being to nurture a happy society, a successful country, and a balanced world. All our achievements can only be meaningful when we create a renewable and supportive environmental, economic and social world. Many nations and governments are working within their countries towards this goal, and there has been a clarion call worldwide to come together for earth-first.

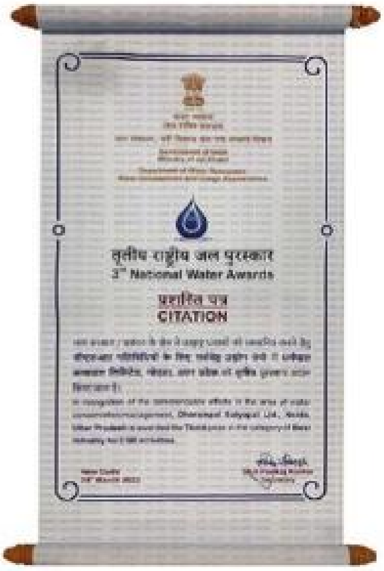
> The Group's Vice Chairman Mr. Rajiv Kumar stated, ***"In the pursuit of improved prospects for the future generations and safeguard our resources, we work to balance environmental, societal and economic considerations. Our sustainability initiatives are spread across the country and in area of energy management, water management, material conservation, recycling and waste management. This aligns our business, social and environmental objectives to make significant contribution to the society and the country. This fulfils our ethos of responsible growth, while delivering superior value to all our stakeholders".***

The DS Group has, very early on, recognized the huge potential that corporates and organizations hold to influence and transform the environment within their reach. The Group has led the way with intent and action.

A multi-business corporation, the DS Group is one of the leading FMCG conglomerate with a strong Indian and international presence. Founded in the year 1929, it is an inspiring and successful business story that blends a remarkable history and legacy with visionary growth. Guided by a clear set of values and built on a strong foundation of philanthropy, corporate responsibility is an integral part of the Group's business objectives to enhance livelihoods and build sustainable communities.

Water Conservation

Water is at the core of the sustainable well-being of humankind, serving crucial links between society, economics, and the environment. Realizing the vitality of water resources, the DS Group has been diligently undertaking cross-sectoral Integrated Water Conservation and Management projects, through its CSR activities in 6 states, benefitting millions of people from impoverished communities. The Group has developed more than 900 water-harvesting structures, with the cumulative capacity of around 80 lakh cubic meters covering 2300 hectares of area under irrigation. Consequently, the crop productivity in the respective areas have increased many-fold.



तृतीय राष्ट्रीय जल पुरस्कार
3rd National Water Awards

प्रशस्ति पत्र
CITATION

Water Economic Zone project by the DS Group, and other interventions have been recognised and honoured with the National Water Award, 2020 & FICCI Award (Category- Environmental Sustainability). 'Water Economic Zone' project alone has benefitted 23000 tribal people in Alsigarh and Kurabad situated in Udaipur district. The project has significantly improved the water table, introduced efficient irrigation techniques, and used solar energy in agriculture. This also potentially brought around 11000 hectares of land under double cropping. All these measures have led to an improved and sustainable economy for the local tribal communities.

A Leading Symbol of Green: The World's No.1 Green Building

The DS Headquarters, housing the corporate office, an R & D center with state of art manufacturing facilities has been awarded Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Platinum certification, under the USGBC (US Green Building Council) existing building O&M (Operation and Maintenance) program version 4.0 making it a global leader amongst all LEED v4 O&M existing buildings worldwide. Holding the highest number of credits amongst existing green buildings, the Group remains at the forefront for three consecutive years. The building also has a vision to get a carbon neutral status in next few years.

Majority of the total work force at the DSHQ uses alternate transport. This results in approximately 4,50,000 ton less CO_2 emissions, which is equivalent to planting 21,600 trees per year. An area of 26% is devoted to native vegetation. The building has nine rain water harvesting pits, and open grid pavers to reduce the storm water run-off from the site and enhance water quantity. The DSHQ also has an organic waste composter making it a close loop system of zero organic waste. Indoor water consumption has been reduced by 32%. Outdoor water usage has significantly reduced by using state of the art systems and technology for irrigation, sewage and effluent treatment. More than 50% of the regularly occupied area at DSHQ has daylight view, reducing artificial lighting consumption. The DSHQ's EPA (Environmental Protection Agency) energy star score is 95.

Towards Green Energy

Even though their processes are not energy intensive, DS Group has taken numerous initiatives towards Green Energy in line with the National Goal of reaching Net Zero Emission for environment protection and combating climate change.

The Group promotes the optimization and reduction of energy through well-defined processes and building a culture of commitment across the organization. Modern technologies have been implemented in various processes to reduce energy consumption, as well as to encourage use of renewable energy at the plants and corporate offices wherever possible. The energy consumption is monitored regularly to achieve continual improvement.

The Group is aggressively moving forward in captive power generation. Roof-top **Solar Power Plants** with cutting edge solar technology and a capacity of 2.94 MW have been installed at various locations of the organization. They have also entered into **Solar Open Access** agreements to obtain Green Energy of approximately 7.49 MW capacity. By these green energy initiatives, approximately 130.31 Lakhs kwh grid energy is saved and about 10,297 ton of CO_2 emission is reduced.

The DSHQ meets 80-82 % energy demand with the help of green power (In-house rooftop solar + open access solar).

Agro Forestry

To plant trees is to give body and life to one's dreams of a better world — Russel Page

In keeping with its vision of safeguarding environmental resources even while responding to in-house requirements, the DS Group entered the Agri Business with a focus on large-scale plantation by acquiring waste and semi-arid land parcels in different parts of the country and converted them to lush green forests for plantation purposes.

The DS Group is well known for its R&D excellence, and here too, the in-house R&D facility focuses on improving variety selection, planting material, package of practice, soil and nutrient management. Water conservation is ensured through 100% drip irrigation and with bio mulch (to conserve surface moisture), sub-surface tanks and ponds. Specially developed water storage structures in the barren lands have not only ensured self- sufficiency in water throughout the year, but also contributed to groundwater replenishment, and an ideal environment for the growth of local bio-diversity.

The environmental impact has been transformative. Besides the resultant biodiversity of flora and fauna, the afforestation has led to soil conservation, a reduction of soil erosion, more oxygen, and natural reduction in the weather temperature. Apart from the environmental impact, improvement of local infrastructure - road connectivity, electricity, education & local business has also taken place. Empowerment through employment to local men and women has led to improvement in socio economic conditions and reduction of rural outmigration.

The commitment and actions of this organization in building a better world for present and future generations are singularly outstanding. Their contribution is noteworthy and they lead the way for others to follow in our quest for a healthy world.

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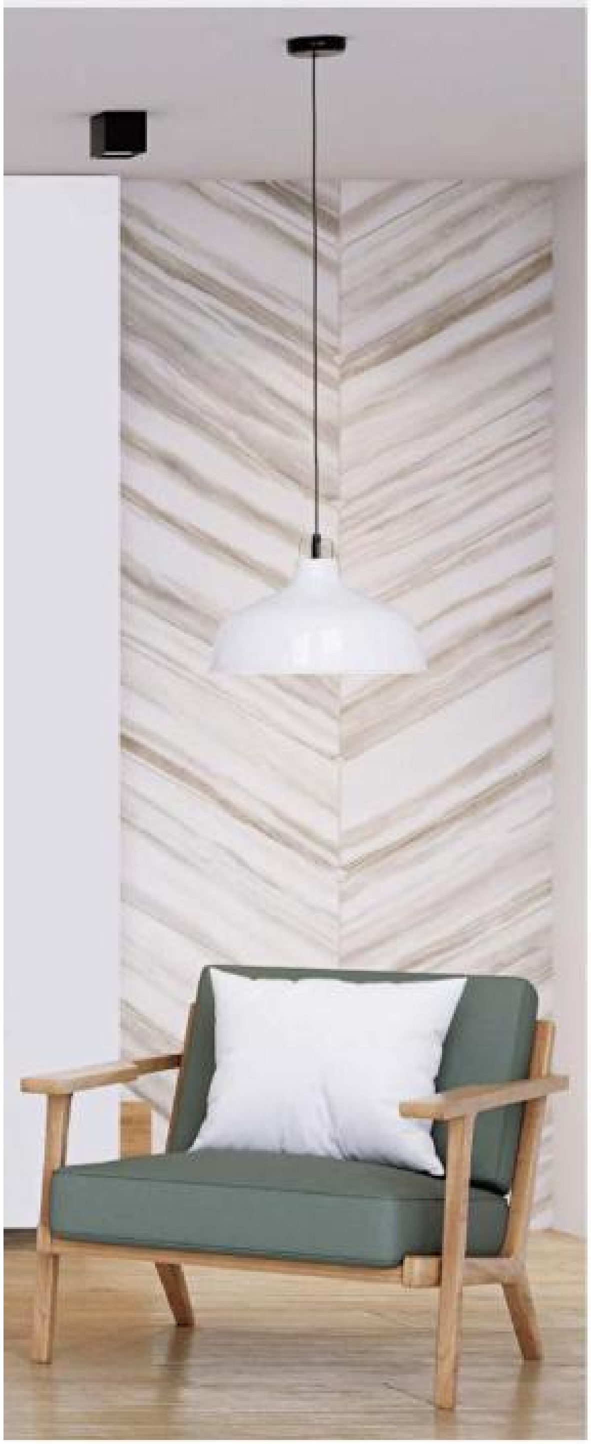
DCM SHRIRAM
Growing with trust



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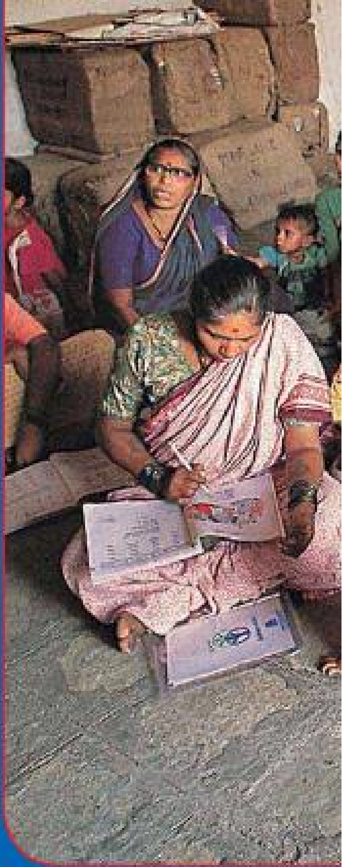
WELFARE INITIATIVES

By **YAMINI AIYAR**

President and chief executive, Centre for Policy Research, New Delhi

FOR THE PEOPLE

The history of India's efforts to build a welfare state, paving the path to freedom, opportunity and justice for all citizens, is both uplifting and sobering. Uplifting because the very fact that the welfare state exists is a triumph of democracy. Democracy ensured that the voices and interests of India's last citizens were heard. But the sobering truth: the battle has been long, hard and continues still. Even 75 years after Independence, India spends far less on welfare programmes—health, education and social protection—than other economies comparable to it. Investments in welfare schemes are regularly derided as 'freebies' rather than welcomed as the moral responsibility of a state, and schemes remain plagued with poor governance and implementation. Nonetheless, the battle 'of, for and by' the last citizen has fuelled audacious experiments in which governments, in the states and at the Centre, and civil society have played a vital role. The evolution of India's welfare state tells the story of the power and possibility of democratic participation—one that has shaped national and global discourse. Here, I celebrate 10 of the best of these.



NAMAS BHOJANI

Total Literacy Campaign

Hunger Challenge

Food security is the foundation of India's welfare state. Distribution of foodgrains through the Public Distribution System (PDS) and hot, cooked midday meals (MDM) are its vital pillars. Once seen as emblematic of the corrupt state, the PDS—whose roots lie in the Green Revolution—saved India through the pandemic and its aftermath. Dating back to 1920s Tamil Nadu, the MDM today feeds nearly 110 million schoolchildren daily across India. Credited with significantly improving school enrolments, the MDM is a critical tool for tackling our malnutrition challenge.

AFP

At the dawn of the Indian Republic in 1950, the country had a literacy rate of 18 per cent. Today nearly 78 per cent Indians are literate. Launched in 1989, the total literacy campaign played a significant role in enabling this achievement. Born in Kerala's Ernakulam as a joint effort between the district administration and the popular science movement Kerala Sasthra Sahithya Parishad, it soon morphed into a national campaign with the creation of the Bharat Gyan Vigyan Samiti, a non-government partner in this effort. It mobilised the bureaucracy and civil society into working together and shaped many significant efforts to expand school education, enlisting 15 million volunteers and 150 million people to attend literacy classes across the country.

National Sample Survey

“Where Mahalanobis and India led, the rest of the world followed”—this is what Nobel laureate Angus Deaton and co-author Valarie Kozel wrote of India's statistical system, and specifically the National Sample Survey (NSS), in 2005. Pioneered by the father of Indian statistics P.C. Mahalanobis in 1950, the NSS soon became the envy of the globe, with the World Bank and the United Nations adopting and adapting NSS methods. The surveys offered critical evidence on the realities of everyday economic life—consumption, employment, poverty. This enabled knowledge-creation, evidence and, above all, public scrutiny, mobilisation and contestation over welfare policies. The NSS and India's statistical system, more generally, are key pillars of our democracy. Today, this remarkable global achievement is suffering a severe credibility crisis, and is in urgent need of rescue.

Pulse Polio Campaign

‘*Do boond zindagi ki*’—Amitabh Bachchan's famous polio immunisation campaign of the early 2000s has become synonymous with India's greatest public health achievement. From accounting for 60 per cent of global polio cases in 1994, India was declared polio-free two decades later. It took concerted government action, from committing financial resources to empowering an army of frontline workers, involving ordinary citizens and innovative awareness drives. This is a fine example of what can be achieved when citizens and the state come together. Not to forget, it also paved the ground for India's successful Covid-19 vaccination drive.

SUBIR HALDER

BHASKAR PAUL

Local Self Government

In 1993, the Indian Parliament passed the 73rd and 74th amendments to the Constitution, mandating the creation of elected local governments at the municipal (urban) and panchayat level. Thirty years later, there is limited political and bureaucratic will to empower local governments with powers and resources, except in some states, notably Kerala. But the presence of 3.2 million elected local government representatives, one-third of them women, cannot be rolled back. A constitutional sanction to include citizens in planning and decision-making through the gram sabha (rural) and ward sabha (urban) holds the possibilities of realising genuine people's power. Despite its apparent flaws, this remains the world's most audacious experiment yet in grassroots democracy.

ANI

Right to Information

Passed by Parliament in 2005, the RTI was a landmark legislation in the pursuit of deeper transparency and accountability in the Indian state. The result of sustained and powerful civic activism, this Act is a radical interpretation of information as a 'right' that is central to citizens' struggles for equality and justice. It is globally recognised as one of the most powerful interpretations (and legislations) of the freedom of information.

Rights-based Welfare

In the 2000s, Parliament enacted a slew of legislations—the right to work, realised via the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act, 2006; the Forest Rights Act, 2006; and the right to food via the National Food Security Act, 2013—that laid the foundation of a rights-based welfare state. The power of rights legislation lies not just in the specific entitlements but in the imagination of welfare that underpinned them. Legalising basic welfare entitlements is a means of empowering citizens to place claims and demand accountability, distinct from the '*mai-baap sarkar*' of yore. The laws trace their roots to civil society and judicial activism and are emblematic of the power of social movements in shaping welfare.

PURUSHOTTAM DIWAKAR

MITSUI CREATING A NEW HISTORY IN INDIA.

Mitsui & Co. is one of the largest global trading and investment companies with a robust international network spanning 65 countries and a diversified business portfolio, working with an extensive network of partners that include many of the world's most successful companies.

Its outstanding long-term performance is founded on strong and expanding core businesses in Energy and Resources, Machinery & Infrastructure, and Chemicals integrated with growing bold and innovative businesses in Health, Environment, Mobility, Nutrition & Agriculture, and Retail & Services.

The overall strategy responds to the increasing global urgency for sustainability, focusing on creating an eco-friendly society, improving living standards and providing a sustainable supply of essential products.

Mitsui's journey in India started in 1893, when the former Mitsui & Co.* opened its first office in Bombay, pioneering exports of cotton and tea, and imports of hand-pulled rickshaws (Jin-riki-sha) from Japan.

The Mitsui & Co. of today opened its first branch office in India in 1955.

We have since grown, evolved, and diversified, to become a trading and investment conglomerate active across various sectors including mobility, infrastructure, chemicals, iron & steel, mineral & metals, energy, food, retail, healthcare and ICT. Along the way, we are proud to have contributed to India's growth, by partnering for major resource projects, setting up manufacturing businesses, and even working on some of the nation's biggest infrastructure projects like construction of Dedicated Freight Corridors of Indian Railway. We continue to partner with Indian and international companies, from conglomerates to startups, offering access to our vast global network and world-class management expertise.

We continuously adapt and innovate to meet India's changing needs. In recent years we ventured into new businesses improving lives of common people by contribution in areas including but not limited to ESG and QOL. Some of the notable presence in ESG for Mitsui in India are – PRESPL (biomass supply chain), Foresee Power (smart battery system), RTC1 project with ReNew (round the clock RE supply), TEMICO (EV powertrain), OMC Power (distributed RE in rural) and Circular Economy; and for catering to consumers lifestyle, we have ventured into cold chain supply (TCICCS) and Food Services (Curry House CoCo ICHIBANYA). As we continue our nation building initiatives, we look forward to the next stretch of our journey, to grow together with our partners and enrich local communities.

***Legally, there is no continuation between the former Mitsui & Co. and the current Mitsui & Co.**

Social Audit

Accompanying the RTI is the practice of social audits (given legal sanction in the MGNREGA) that empowers citizens to, quite literally, turn in to auditors to scrutinise government records, and through public hearings directly demand accountability for government actions. Implemented with varying degrees of enthusiasm by the state, social audits represent an important platform for making the idea of citizen's empowerment and direct demand for government accountability a tangible reality.

SAVE RTI
SAVE DEMOCRACY
SAVE RTI
SAVE DEMOCRACY
वाचवा
वाचवा
SAVE DEMOCRACY

GETTY IMAGES

AP

Self Help Groups

Walk into the remotest of village in India, and chances are you will meet women, young and old, who are members of a local Self Help Group (SHG)—informal associations that enable access to low-cost credit. A revolution of sorts in women's financial inclusion was unleashed in the 1970s when a pioneering nonprofit mobilised women's trade unions to set up the SEWA bank. Soon, the SHG movement was embraced by governments across India and the globe, and is today a critical tool not just for enabling women's access to finance but also social networks and capacity for collective action.

Accredited Social Health Activists

In a country where government struggles to fill vacancies in clinics and doctors rarely show up to work (absenteeism rates are as high as 40 per cent), it is the army of ASHAs who deliver health services—and hope—to much of India. Since 2005, India has recruited and trained nearly one million ASHAs, who live and work in the local community as part of one of the largest community health worker programmes in the world. Through the pandemic, it was the ASHAs who crossed mountains and rivers, braving the fear of disease, to deliver healthcare and vaccinate much of India.

GETTY IMAGES

Everyone deserves access to CANCER CARE

- Cancer is one of the leading causes of morbidity and mortality worldwide, with approximately 19million new cases in 2020 in the world.
- Cancer is the second leading cause of death globally and was responsible for 9.9 million deaths in 2020.

India is not far in this league 1.3 million new cases of cancer and more than 8 lakhs of deaths.

Cancer is not only a health concern, it is a complex issue that also involves social, economic, developmental, and human rights. The numbers listed above are alarming and people around the world to be aware that a cancer diagnosis is not a death sentence. Today, some cancers that were once considered deadly are treatable and, in some cases, curable. The advancements in understanding risk factors, along with prevention, early detection and rapid treatment have improved cancer management.

Healthcare systems around the world are continuously evolving. Personalized medicine, popularly known as precision medicine in oncology, is one such approach that different healthcare systems around the world are trying to incorporate into their current medical practice as much as they can.

Currently, a cancer patient is required to undergo extensive testing to identify the extent, stage, and grade of cancer. Based on the reports, a team of oncologists decides the course of treatment. Every patient is likely to receive a combination of treatment, which may include chemotherapy, surgery, radiation therapy, immunotherapy, or hormonal therapy.

Even though it is now known that specific genetic changes in the cells cause cancer. However, genetic testing to identify the type of changes in the DNA of the cells is not conducted for every patient. In fact, they are made to undergo several cycles of chemotherapy and radiation therapy, following surgery.

This is partly because there is no way for the doctors to identify individual treatment for each patient. Therefore, they follow a standardized and most common approach for cancer treatment.

Dr. P K Das
MBBS, MD, DM (AIIMS),
Senior Consultant, Medical Oncologist
Indraprastha Apollo Hospital, New Delhi

> We need to prepare a treatment plan that is most likely to suit the patient with the given genetic changes, this benefits the patients

Currently cancer treatment will be more individualized and based on the actual genetic changes in each person's cancer. Advancements being made in the field of molecular biology, there are extensive genetic testing that help drugs that directly target those changes.

While precision medicine is expected to become a mainstream medicine in the near future, a part of it is already in practice.

Dr.P K Das said, *"We need to prepare a treatment plan that is most likely to suit the patient with the given genetic changes, this benefits the patients"*.

There are several drugs that have already been approved by the Food and Drug Administration in the US. These drugs directly target genetic changes in the cells, based on the type, size, and the region of the spread of cancer. The use of drugs to target the changes in the DNA is also known as targeted drug therapy

Treatment is possible in early stages and late stage with chemotherapy and targeted therapy in an effective and tolerated way. Early treatment of various cancer like late state lymphoma, testicular cancer will lead to better survival. New therapies like Immunotherapy can also lead to success in late stage of the lungs, kidneys, and mouth cancer. Targeted therapies in late-stage cancer are well tolerated and effective. Accordingly, late-stage cancer, simple and successful treatment can be done. For this it is advisable to consult a cancer physician and surgeon in your area without being frightened or misled by the cancer.

Choose to maintain a healthy lifestyle to reduce your chance of getting cancer.

Avoid alcohol or drink in moderation, eat a healthy diet, Exercise regularly, get regular checkups and talk to your doctor about cancer screening, know your family history of cancer and talk with your doctor about it, limit your time in the sun, apply sunscreen, and wear protective clothing, quit using tobacco. Ask your health care provider for help quitting.

The best way we can manage a cancer is by understanding the early signs and beginning timely management. So, let's fight together.

By creating awareness, we recognise the power of knowledge. We know that every single one of us can make a difference, large or small, and that together we can make real progress in reducing the global impact of cancer.

GLOBOCAN-2020 https://gco.iarc.fr/

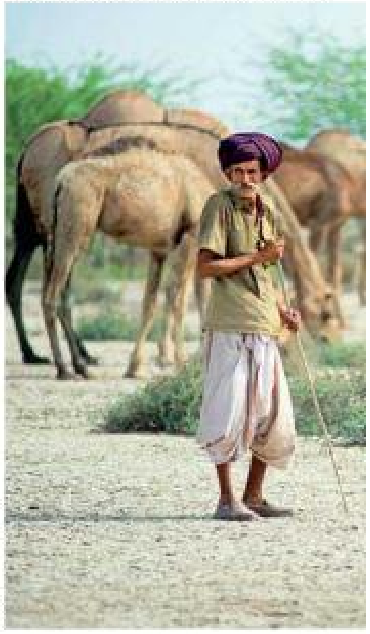
THE GOOD FIGHT

The story of India is also a story of inherent inequities. Some individuals and groups showed not just the vision to dream of a better, more just society but also the grit and conviction to build it

By **AMITA BAVISKAR**

Sociologist at Ashoka University

ANSHUMAN SEN/INDIA TODAY ARCHIVE



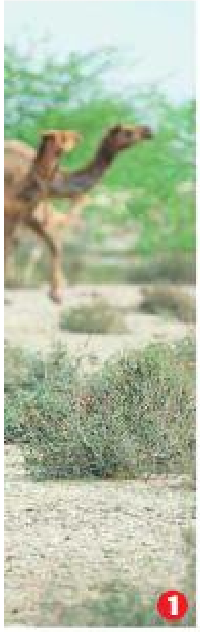
ANSHUMAN SEN

INDIA PICTURE

'Bad news on the doorstep'. This phrase from Don McLean's classic song *American Pie* crosses my mind every morning as I pick up the newspaper tossed onto my balcony. Against the daily dose of despair—the downward spiral of public life, the distress of marginalised communities, the devastation of the environment—I feel all the more grateful for these sources of light that dispel the dark; for people who can imagine a better world and have the courage to bring it to life; for citizens who have taken to heart Mahatma Gandhi's talisman of thinking of the poorest and the weakest first, and who have committed to striving for compassion and justice towards others.

India lives in its villages. Six out of every 10 Indians still depend on farm-related work for their livelihood. Yet, such is the relentless grind of rising input costs, uncertain markets and unpredictable weather that many cannot make ends meet. Migrating to cities for work seems to be the only way to ease this reproduction squeeze. This deadlock has been broken by the **Deccan Development Society** (**DDS**) in Telangana and its focus on millets. By helping Dalit women farmers secure land and grow crops eminently suited for drylands, the DDS has enabled them to become debt-free and eat healthier food while being kinder to the planet. In Andhra Pradesh, the **Timbaktu Collective** works in the same spirit by building cooperatives that support villagers' return to organic farming and regenerating forests. Together, they show a way past the cul-de-sac of chemical- and water-intensive farming.

The belief that economy and ecology must work in harmony also inspires the **Sahjeevan Trust** in Kutch, Gujarat.



HARSHA VADLAMANI

1. A camel herder from the Banni grasslands region, where the Sahjeevan Trust works

2. A group of women associated with the Deccan Development Society, Telangana

3. SCOPE supports community fisheries near Kolkata

4. Malkha works with weavers and cotton-growers in Telangana

For centuries, livestock herding communities have coexisted with wildlife in the Banni grasslands there, expertly breeding buffaloes and camels best suited to the terrain. However, government restrictions, encroachment and invasive plants have decimated the pastures. The Maldharis' distinctive way of life is in peril. Sahjeevan helps villagers regain and restore the grasslands and maintain local livestock breeds. Like DDS and Timbaktu, Sahjeevan believes people have the knowledge and ability to find lasting solutions. All they need is a helping hand.

East of Kolkata, **SCOPE** helps farmers and fisherfolk who sustain a remarkable system that biodegrades sewage from the city to produce paddy, vegetables, and fish. Villagers channel Kolkata's liquid waste into shallow ponds where they use the nutrient-rich water to grow food. SCOPE has set up this ingenious sewage treatment-cum-food production system in the Hooghly saltwater marshes and prevented them from being swallowed up by urban encroachment.

It is often forgotten that India's villages produce not only food but all manners of artisanal goods. An economy of skilled crafts that sustained millions was destroyed by colonialism. By hand-spinning cotton yarn and wearing khadi, Gandhi reminded us that defending this economy was an intrinsic part of our freedom. For **Malkha** in Hyderabad, recreating khadi today has meant not only supporting the weavers of hand-spun, handwoven cloth, but working with farmers to bring back local cotton varieties that were more suited to khadi. By tying these threads together, they have strengthened not only khadi but a larger ecosystem of sustainable production and consumption. **Bindaas Unlimited** in Kaladera, Rajasthan, has applied the same principles to revive natural dyeing, widening their market by crafting witty prints that are an affordable alternative to mass, throwaway fashion.

Besides *roti* and *kapda*, we need so much more to survive. Good health is essential. Often, the foremost reason why people sink into poverty is a medical crisis that entails catastrophic

ROHIT PANSARE

3
मेरा पैगाम
मोहब्बत है
जहाँ तक पहुँचे

KeM

1. *A fabric on display by Rajasthan's Bindaas Unlimited*

2. *A training centre run by the Jan Swasthya Sahyog in Chhattisgarh*

3. *Posters by Karwan-e-Mohabbat in Delhi*

AGAINST THE DOWNWARD SPIRAL OF PUBLIC LIFE AND THE DISTRESS OF THE MARGINALISED, THESE GROUPS ARE A SILVER LINING

costs. In Bilaspur, Chhattisgarh, **Jan Swasthya Sahyog (JSS)** offers succour to Adivasis who shuffle between an uncaring government system and ruthless private practitioners. The JSS is not a charity; it doesn't dole out band-aids. Instead, it focuses on the rights of Adivasis to good nutrition and health by delivering services that address their priorities. The JSS also trains villagers to be health workers for their community, providing practical skills where they are most needed, reducing their reliance on undependable others.

Most of us wouldn't know about these efforts if it weren't for the **People's Archive of Rural India (PARI)**, that extraordinary repository of reportage and cultural chronicles by students and professional journalists across the country. Here are stories in vivid words and pictures of every aspect of rural reality. They describe the harshness of caste, class and gender, but also the wondrous, the joyful, and the absurd.

Another initiative that I love for how it tackles a serious subject—sexuality—with sass is **Agents of Ishq**. Its non-preachy, playful tone never gives way to boredom or condescension, deftly tackling the taboo around conversations on sex, love and desire.

Speaking of love, I must salute **Karwan-e-Mohabbat (KeM)**, a Delhi-based initiative that journeys to places where communal violence has broken people's lives. This motley group has dedicated itself to listening to others' pain. When the politics of hate has divided communities, Karwan reminds us that there are still others who care. With beautifully crafted short films that bring alive the spirit of the Indian Constitution, KeM drives home its message about the enduring ties that connect all Indians.

It takes a special kind of integrity and grit to dedicate oneself to the task of creating a country where everyone can lead a life of dignity and purpose, where we protect the earth that nurtures us, and cultivate our astonishingly rich cultural and ecological diversity. Extraordinary people spurred the 10 groups in this essay. But, like Gandhi, it is their ability to inspire thousands of seemingly ordinary people to greatness that has effected change. ■

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NAFED
In pursuit of bringing prosperity to the Farm Sector

With a glorious legacy spanning over more than six decades, NAFED turns its gaze to multi-operational efficiency in newer terrains, while improving the income of farmers, transforming their lives and livelihoods, and boosting the growth of rural economy. The organisation has been serving the country by supporting the key welfare schemes of the Government and living up to its larger social mandate.

NAFED has emerged as an agency handling the largest volume of Pulses in the world while working for the welfare of farmers as well as consumers and boosting the rural economy.

RAJBIR SINGH, IFS
Managing Director, NAFED

National Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Federation of India (NAFED), which is one of the largest procurement as well as marketing agencies for agricultural, horticultural and forest produce, significantly contributes towards making agriculture viable and sustainable for the farmers, thus supporting rural economy in a big way.

NAFED, through its country wide operations, plays a crucial role in improving the living conditions of farmers and bringing prosperity to rural economy. The organisation's multifarious activities are of immense significance not only to farmers, but also the consumers. At a larger level, NAFED's relentless country wide agri related operations ensure food security for the nation and provide efficient market linkages to the farmers.

The Journey of NAFED....

Functioning under the Ministry of Agriculture, Government of India, NAFED was founded on October 2, 1958 and is presently registered under the Multi State Cooperative Societies Act. The mission of NAFED is to organise, promote and develop cooperative marketing, processing and storage of agricultural, horticultural and forest resources across the nation. NAFED's members comprise National, State, District and grass root level Cooperative Marketing Federations/Societies.

The period of 2007-08 to 2015-16 was a turbulent phase for NAFED. In 2015-16, it accumulated a debt of around Rs 1700 crore .The organisation took some crucial strategic decisions with the support of Government of India and made a remarkable turnaround in 2017-18 with record business turnover and profitability. The performance is being sustained since then and during FY 2021-22, NAFED recorded a turnover of Rs. 19, 752.23 crore and earned a net profit of Rs. 139.27 crore.

Post revival, NAFED continues to render nation-wide services to the farmers and also the consumers, armed & para military forces and the states by supporting the key welfare schemes of Central & State Governments and living up to its larger social mandate.

Supporting the Farmers....

Procurement of agri commodities is the core competence of NAFED. The Federation has been serving the farmers of the nation for over six decades through procurement of oilseeds, pulses, spices, foodgrains and horticulture produce. The Price Support Operations of NAFED for oilseeds and pulses ensure Minimum Support Price to farmers for their produce. NAFED also procures wheat and paddy at MSP for the central pool as agency of FCI or State Governments. Being the designated agency for procurement of copra and de husked coconut, NAFED ensures Minimum Support Price to growers of this perennial commodity.

During last 5 years, a quantity of 178.20 lakh MT of oilseeds and pulses was procured by NAFED providing benefit of Minimum Support Price to lakh of farmers across the country. The Federation also procured around 21 Lakh MT of paddy and wheat at MSP during the same period.

The Pulse Arm of the Nation.....

India is the largest producer, importer and consumer of pulses in the world. NAFED has emerged as the largest pulse procurement and handling agency in the world. Over the past few years, NAFED has handled unprecedented volumes of pulses by way of procurement, processing and distribution. During the last 5 years, around 120 lakh MT of pulses were procured by the Federation and liquidated by way of supply to institutions and sale in open market. During current year, NAFED has procured 24.60 Lakh MT of pulses across the country and procurement still continues. The prestigious institutional buyers of NAFED's stocks of pulses also include the Army and the Central Para Military Forces. Besides various States are also fulfilling their requirement of pulses from NAFED for utilisation under various Central / State Government Schemes like MDM, ICDS, PDS etc.

NAFED's response to COVID pandemic......

India, like any other country, was caught by surprise at the onset of the COVID 19 Pandemic and had to grapple with unprecedented challenges. One of the most critical challenges the nation faced during lockdown was ensuring the continuity of food supply chain. The Government announced various initiatives to deal with the situation. Supply of pulses to the households across the nation under the Pradhan Mantri Gramin Kalyan Ann Yojana (PMGKAY) and whole Chana to the migrant workers during the migrant crises under the Aatma Nirbhar Bharat package were some of these.

Reposing faith in the abilities of NAFED, the task of supplies against the aforesaid schemes was entrusted to NAFED. The Federation lost no time and completed the supplies successfully in time bound manner as per direction of the Government. The operation was implemented amidst extremely challenging conditions. The entire workforce of NAFED rose to the occasion exhibiting tremendous grit, determination and dedication , not caring for their own safety . A quantity of around 1.50 million MT of pulses were supplied in a span of 9 months across the country using various modes of transport including trucks, railway wagon/container rakes, aircrafts of Indian Air Force and boats/ships. Around 810 million beneficiary families were provided 1kg of pulses per month continuously for nine months w.e.f. March 2020 to November 2020.

When the Pandemic struck India, the standing Rabi 2020 crop was ready for harvest. NAFED opened record number of procurement centers across the country so that farmers did not face difficulty in selling their produce. More than Rs 25000-30000 Crore of oilseeds, pulses and foodgrains were procured at MSP by NAFED providing great respite to farmers.

Buffer Stocking of Onion and Pulses for checking domestic price rise....

Government of India has set up Price Stablization Fund (PSF) with a view to tackle price volatility in some agri-horticultural commodities viz onion, potato and pulses to protect the interest of consumers. These commodities are to be procured from farmers/farmer's associations at the time of harvesting and stored for regulated release during lean season to help regulate any abnormal spurt in prices. Such market intervention by Government helps in sending appropriate market signal and deter speculative/hoarding activities

During ongoing FY 2022-23, NAFED has purchased 2.50 lakh tons of onion for buffer stocking . The onion buffer size in current year is 25 percent higher in comparison to last year. NAFED's initiative serves the twin objectives of providing remunerative prices to farmers and augmenting the availability of food stocks at affordable market prices to consumers.

Contribution to creation of Greener Earth....

NAFED produces Bio-CBG out of stubble/agri/municipal waste and manufactures bio-fertilisers to help farmers in cutting down the cost of cultivation and reducing the soil and water pollution. It promotes re-use of waste material, compressed bio gas, bio fertilizers and biotechnology in cultivation. NAFED signed an MoU with Indian Oil Corporation Limited for production of Compressed Bio-Gas, Ethanol, Bio Diesel, sourcing of feedstock for the plants and marketing of finished/bye products like CBG, Fermented Organic Manure (FOM), Liquid Fermented Organic Manure (LFOM), Dried Distillers Grain with Soluble (DDGS) etc.

NAFED has been implementing adoption and certification projects of organic farming for over a decade to promote sustainable agriculture and also undertakes production and distribution of certified seeds . It has also been nominated as one of the Central Seed Production Agencies by Department of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, Government of India.

Serving the Consumers through NAFED Bazaar Outlets...

NAFED is operating a chain of NAFED Bazaar outlets to cater to the needs of consumers. NAFED brand products like pulses, spices, rice, dry fruits etc. are popular amongst the consumers owing to good quality and reasonable prices. The NAFED brand Tea is highly popular amongst the consumer. Presently 22 number of outlets are operating in Delhi NCR and other states . An entire range of organic farm products are available for consumers in NAFED Bazaars.

Supporting the Honey Producers through Honey FPO Mission....

As one of the national implementing agencies under the Central Sector Scheme for formation and promotion of 10,000 Farmer Producer Organisations (FPOs), NAFED has successfully registered FPOs of beekeepers and honey collectors in five locations: East Champaran (Bihar), Morena (Madhya Pradesh), Bharatpur (Rajasthan), Mathura (Uttar Pradesh) and Sunderbans (West Bengal). Hon'ble Prime Minister Sh. Narendra Modi released the matching equity grant of Rs 203 Lakh on 1st January, 2022 to 42 FPOs promoted by NAFED. He also interacted with members of Bharatpur Honey FPO formed by NAFED.

Promoting One District One Product Initiative....

NAFED is a nodal implementing agency for developing One District One Product (ODOP) brands. The Ministry of Food Processing Industries has signed an agreement with NAFED under which the products are developed based on the extensive knowledge and marketing expertise of NAFED. Under the Prime Minister Formalisation of MicroFood Processing Enterprises (PM FME), NAFED has conceptualised and developed more than 20 products following the FSSAI guidelines. NAFED's ODOP range of products are gaining popularity amongst the consumers.

Promoting Millets towards Global Food and Nutritional Security....

The United Nations has declared 2023 as the International Year of Millets in order to promote the consumption of millets globally. In this context, NAFED has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Department of Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare to contribute towards this initiative of the Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi. Under the MOU, NAFED will collaborate in key areas from facilitating advisory support to manufacturers/processors of millet-based products to develop value-added millet-based commodities.

International Trade....

NAFED has decades of rich experience, expertise and infrastructure for undertaking import/export of all kinds of agricultural commodities. The Federation arranges supply of agri and other commodities to various countries towards humanitarian assistance on behalf of the Ministry of External Affairs, Govt. of India. NAFED also exports commodities under Government to Government (G2G) arrangements and under its own outright account. Whether it is G2G or relief supplies, NAFED is accountable for upholding the image of the nation with its foot soldiers ensuring that social responsibility is never a hurdle for multi-operational efficiency.

LOOKING FORWARD

Procurement being the core competence of NAFED, the organisation continues to procure stocks of oilseeds such as groundnuts, soyabean and mustard and pulses such as moong, urad and arhar under PSS. It is also the Central Agency for creation and management of national buffer of pulses and onion. The organisation's profitability is since being sustained with increasing turnover and launch of new business initiatives.

Led by Dr. Bijender Singh as Chairman and Sh. Rajbir Singh, IFS as Managing Director, NAFED is richly equipped with the experience and capability to explore new avenues of growth and expansion. It is contributing to a comprehensive growth of the farm sector, and also supporting the allied activities. With the business increasing manifold and lessons learnt from the past, NAFED is fully equipped to strive for excellence. The organization has proved its mettle and emerged triumphant and stronger through all the turbulation due to its inherent strength and core values.

By **RAGHUNATH MASHELKAR**

Scientist, innovator and technocrat

Proof of Eminence

Indian scientists and innovators have had numerous achievements in the past 75 years that have made us all proud. If the Green and White Revolutions ensured food security for the nation, its nuclear, space and defence research has placed India among the global leaders. Here, we select the key milestones that have been game-changers for India

NAMAS BHOJANI

Exploration Geologists

Fuelling India's early oil exploration

It is not widely known that every hydrocarbon molecule in India's oil reserves has been discovered by Indian exploration geologists. North Sea oil and offshore Bombay High oil and gas were discovered almost simultaneously. But India beat the UK in bringing the production to its peak earlier. This was achieved by the technologists of the Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) under the leadership of its visionary chairman Bhanu Prasad. Mumbai High and Bassein are today India's top oil- and gas-producing fields, accounting for almost two-thirds of the country's total production.

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Process Chemistry

Making India the 'Pharmacy of the World'

India is now known as the 'pharmacy of the world', ranking third in pharmaceutical production. It exports pharmaceuticals to more than 200 countries and territories, fulfilling 50 per cent of the global demand for vaccines and 40 per cent of generic demand in the US. This was fuelled by the prowess of process chemistry and engineering of the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR)'s chemical group of laboratories such as the NCL, IICT and CDRI in the early 1970s. The price of antiretroviral treatment for HIV-AIDS, which was $10,000 per person annually in 2000, has been brought down to $120. The trigger was the process chemistry innovation done at the IICT, and commercialised by Cipla. This not only saved millions of lives but also led to the landmark 2011 Doha declaration.

Connectivity Revolutions

Bridging the digital divide

Connectivity Revolution 1.0 happened in the mid-'80s with physical telephony. C-DOT triggered the telecom and IT revolution by launching an indigenous digital rural 128-line electronic exchange, which could work in dusty conditions, and despite erratic electric supply. It connected Indian cities and villages for the first time. Connectivity Revolution 2.0 happened with mobile telephony. India had ranked 155th globally in mobile data consumption in 2017. Reliance's Jio catapulted it to the first position. Jio paved the way to accelerating Digital India and bridging the digital divide meaningfully by connecting over 450 million Indians to the Internet in less than five years, thus fundamentally changing their lives. The affordable access to the internet in its every nook and cranny has paved the way for India's advanced digital transformation.

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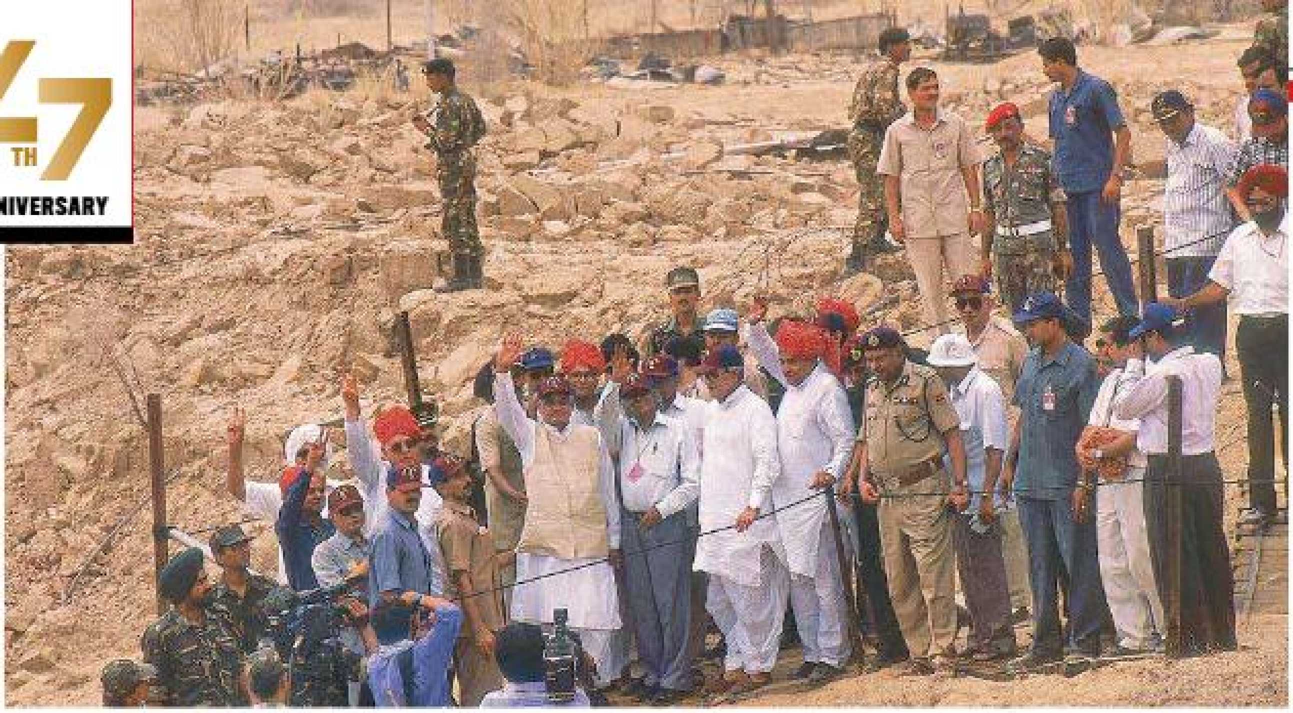


PUSHKARNA PRAMOD

Nuclear Prowess

From being denied technology To self-reliance

By conducting the successful nuclear tests of Pokhran-1 in May 1974 and Pokhran-2 in May 1998, India boldly showcased its self-reliance in nuclear weapons development. The Indian tests changed the nature of the international non-proliferation game as well as the structure of international security. The Nuclear Suppliers Group severely affected India's nuclear programme, with the world's major nuclear powers imposing a technological embargo. But this denial helped develop our self-reliant capability in atomic energy in power and non-power applications, nuclear submarine, and both fission and fusion/ thermonuclear-based weapons.

REUTERS

India Stack

Digital India among global frontrunners

India Stack positioned Indians as the trailblazers of the Internet age by promoting financial and social inclusion across the country. The foundation for this digital transformation was laid by the Aadhaar card that provided identity to 1.3 billion Indians by enabling quick identification of the user digitally, anywhere, anytime. In 2016, the second arm of India Stack was born with the announcement of the Unified Payments Interface (UPI) that catapulted the entire nation into the era of digital payments just by scanning a QR code. Within just six years, it has become the world's fifth largest payment network by volume, surpassing over 20 billion online transactions during the second quarter of 2022.

AFP

ISRO

A glorious space story

In 1981, the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) carried its APPLE Satellite on a bullock cart. In four decades, India has achieved global leadership, with ISRO launching 129 satellites of Indian origin and 342 foreign satellites from 36 countries. This satellite-enabled data and services capability acted as building blocks of India's IT and telecom revolution, offering a platform for game-changing solutions—from weather forecasting to television broadcasting to mobile communications. Its impact traverses multiple dimensions. For instance, the National Stock Exchange (NSE) did satellite-based financial market trading for the first time in the world. VSAT technology was used to build computer-based order matching at the exchange, resulting in a quantum leap in the quality of the Indian equity market.

GETTY IMAGES

Covid Vaccination

India as the 'Vaccine Capital of the World'

India had already established its reputation as a leader in research, innovation, manufacture and deployment of vaccines, be it polio, hepatitis B, rotavirus, etc. But this Indian capacity was stress-tested during the Covid-19 pandemic. The Serum Institute of India came out with a Covid vaccine based on licensed technology. The National Institute of Virology and Bharat Biotech jointly developed Covaxin. These indigenous vaccines saved millions of lives. The effective management and administration of over two billion doses within a record time of 18 months was made possible by the CoWIN platform, built by the National Informatics Centre.

DRDO

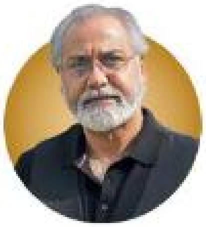
From tech-deprivation to techno-nationalism

Despite the denial of strategic technologies, the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) achieved many milestones, such as the rocket and missile programme. The Agni and Prithvi missiles, Akash surface-to-air missile, submarine-launched ballistic K-15 missile system and supersonic cruise missile BrahMos, which was developed in partnership with Russia and was the fastest in its category when introduced, are among its achievements. So is the laser-based Directed Energy Weapons (DEW) system.

ANI

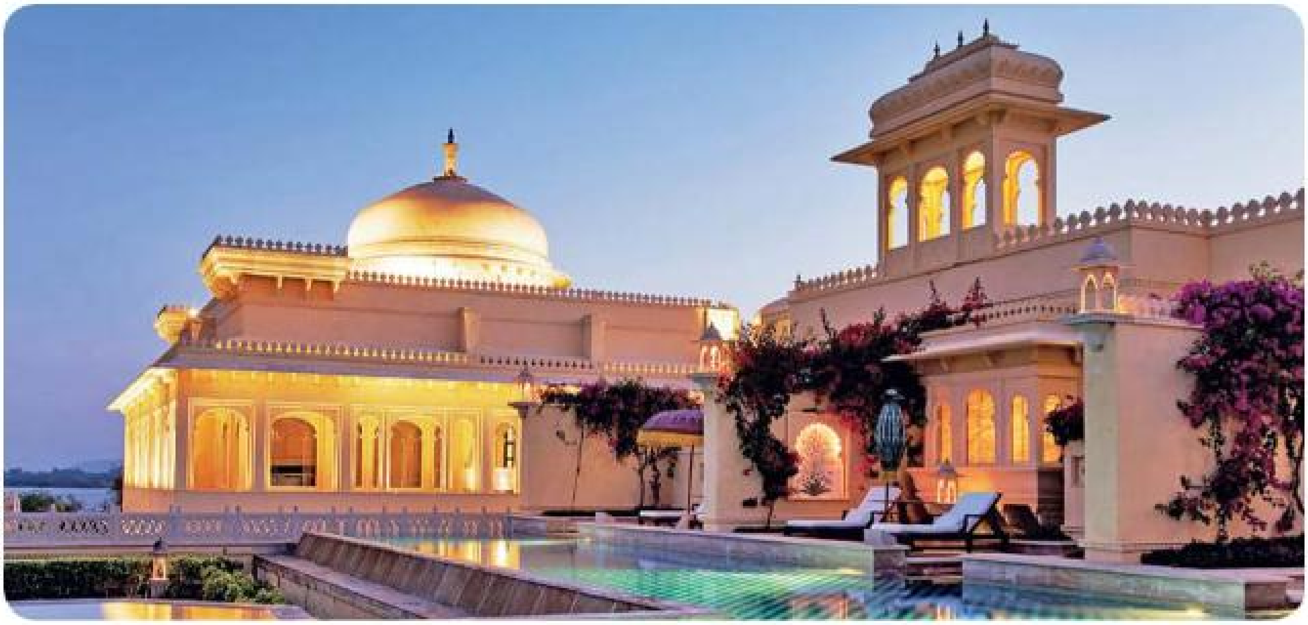
By **HABEEB KHAN**

Practising architect and president of the Council of Architecture



Built for the Future, Out of the Past

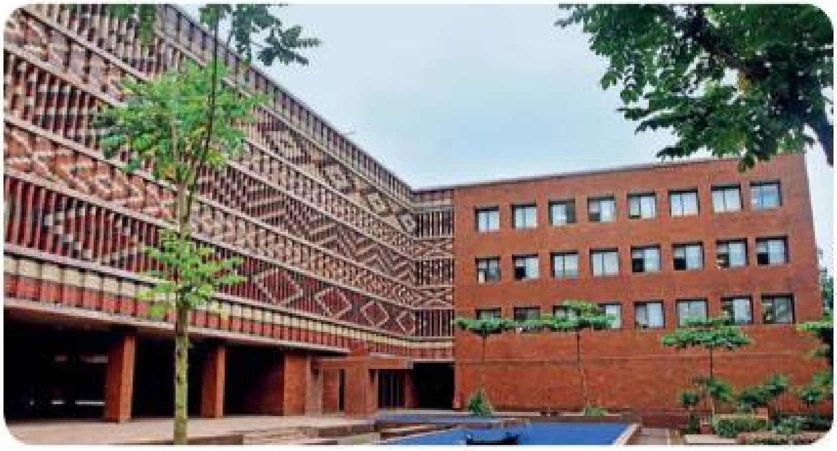
Setting out to name most influential architectural works post-Independence in such a vast, diverse country as ours is like trying to finish walking in one of Escher's Impossible Constructions. In the initial years itself, the traditional architectural gene was to encounter the modern temper of Le Corbusier and Louis Kahn. Indian masters like B.V. Doshi, Charles Correa, Achyut Kanvinde, Raj Rewal, Anant Raje, Laurie Baker, Habib Rahman, Joseph Stein and Hasmukh Patel contributed to that conversation with modernism. The novelty writ itself in scores of buildings: Gandhi Ashram in Ahmedabad, Dudhsagar Dairy in Mehsana, India International Centre and Asian Games Village in Delhi, India Coffee House in Thiruvananthapuram, Capitol Complex in Chandigarh, Dasmesh Academy in Anandpur Sahib, Kanchanjunga Apartments in Mumbai and many more path-breaking projects that defined India and its aspirations in the first five decades. For this special issue, we have identified significant works of a new India that have been built recently and are torchbearers for a contextually sustainable future of India.



INDIA PICTURE

The Oberoi Udaivilas *Udaipur, 2003*

India has a long and varied architectural heritage, and the artisanal skills intricately associated with it were part of the legacy. After Independence, as Indian architects took a conscious decision to turn to modernity to become a part of the emerging international scenario, traditional architecture and its allied skills suffered a setback. Decades later, the need to re-establish traditional building methods, materials and skills gave a new impetus to the idea of employing traditional craftsmanship in projects. The Oberoi Udaivilas stands as an exemplary project born out of this thought process, whereby local craftsmen were given an opportunity to revive their age-old skills and an India-specific architecture was created and curated by Nimish Patel and Parul Zaveri of Abhikram.



BADRISH NARAYAN PATI

Krushi Bhavan

Bhubaneswar, 2018

The project, deriving its expression from the state of Odisha, reaches for an architectural identity identifiable with it. Its distinctive brick facade is created by using clay of three different colours that represent the state's diversity. But more fascinating is the way it does that through a kind of transposition between the arts. The facade of Krushi Bhavan celebrates the rich weaves of the state—the patterns are a recreation in brick of the traditional *ikat* weave of Odisha. The building therefore is an eloquent statement: it seeks to make architecture contextual, embodying a sense of identity and belonging to a land, its people, their culture and art. Designed by Ambrish Arora of Studio Lotus, this masterpiece sets a fine example of what Indian architecture should stand for.

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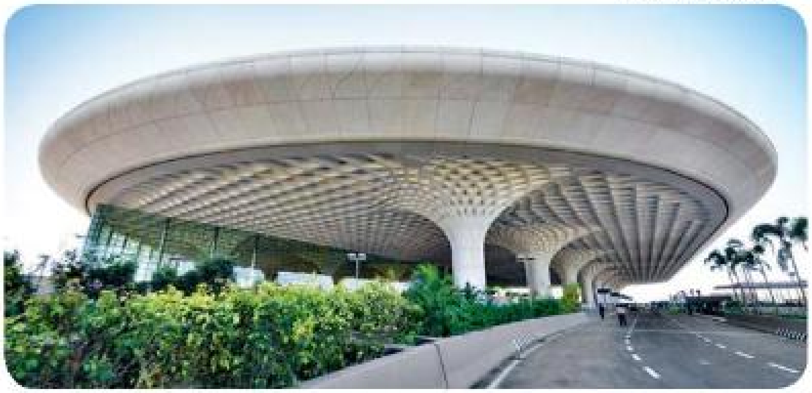
RACHIT GOSWAMI



Terminal 2 of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj International Airport ***Mumbai, 2014***

Setting a new standard of airport design in India, Terminal 2 (T2) of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj International Airport, Mumbai, shows how architecture can change perceptions. T2 not only raised the expectation of air travellers but set a bar high enough to improve the built quality of new-age airports. Designed by Skidmore, Owings and Merrill along with the in-house team of L&T, T2 is one of the finest examples of structural elements and systems becoming architectural features. Necessarily a functional and operational typology, its architecture and engineering stand out nonetheless.

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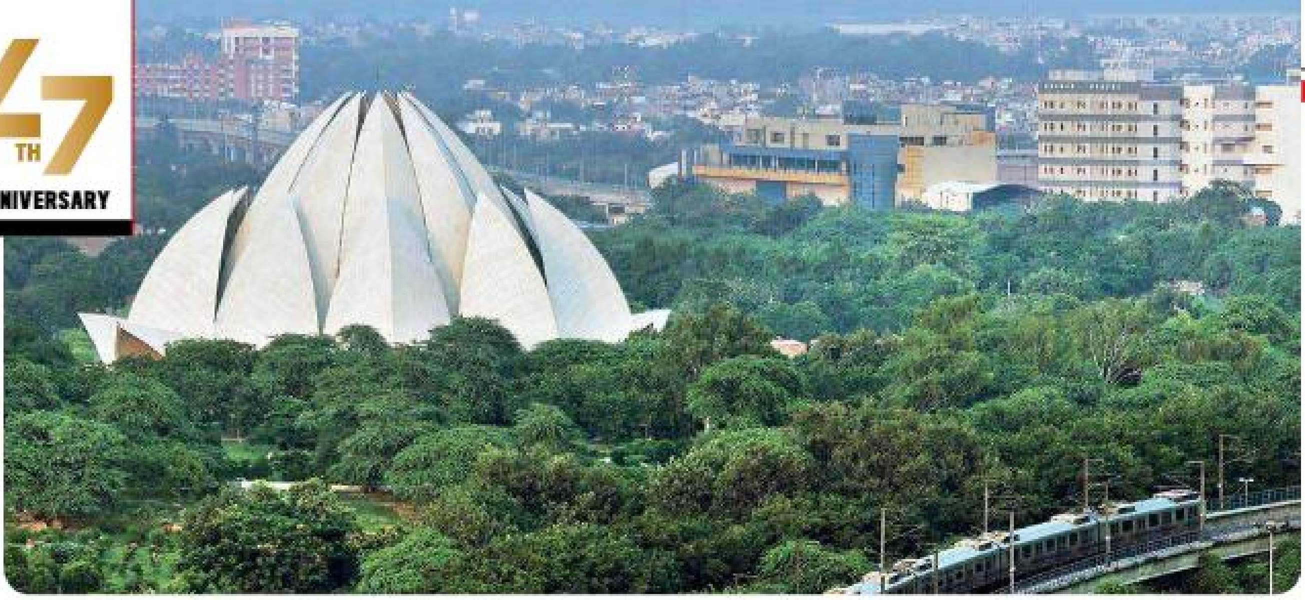

ANI

Lotus Temple

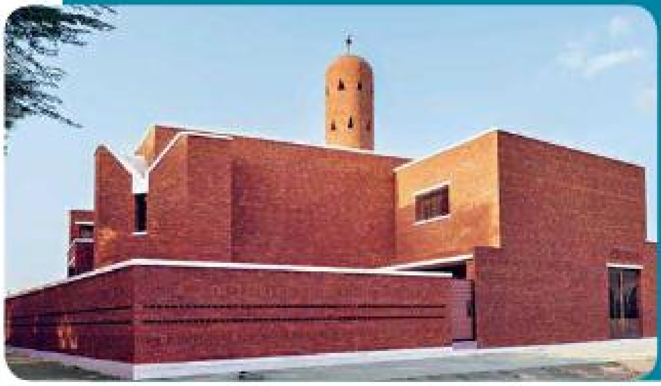
New Delhi, 1986

One of the landmark projects in contemporary Indian architecture, the Lotus Temple—a Bahá'í House of Worship—set a fine example of synthesis of architectural design and structural engineering. A multifaith praying space couldn't have a more apt architecture. The quality of pure-white spaces, both outside and inside, creates the desired spiritual peace that is expected out of a structure like this. The technology of building elements was futuristic and, after the Sydney Opera House, set a higher benchmark for all construction and architectural designs to follow.

Masjid-e-Haji Abdur Rauf (Lal Masjid)

Malegaon, 2016

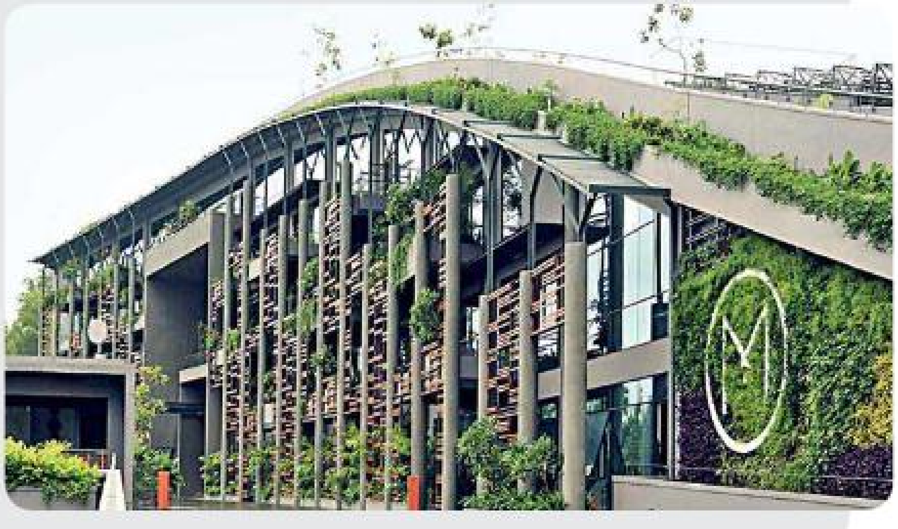
This place of faith employs the humble and most available building material—the brick. And by its use, imparts a fresh expression to the typology of the mosque. Designed by Noor Aboojiwala, Bakir Zafar and Sunil Thanekar of NBZ Architects, this mosque incorporates light in a physical and spiritual manner rarely seen in contemporary Indian architecture. Taking ahead the thought process set by the Salvacao Church in Mumbai, which breaks the stereotypical iconography of a religious structure, this mosque's revolutionary design sets a fine example of a balance between contemporary architecture vis-à-vis the traditional building ethos of a place of faith, while again striving to connect the place and its people to its context.



Malabar Group Headquarters

Kozhikode, 2018

Its contoured site, humid climate and contextually rich heritage were the challenges that Tony Joseph of Stapati took up while designing the headquarters of the Malabar Group. An immense spine in its centre allows easy access across the interior and incorporates flora in plenty. It is an example of Indian architecture for the new millennium—a modern but sustainable workplace that's contextually loyal to the land and people it was built for.



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Zostel

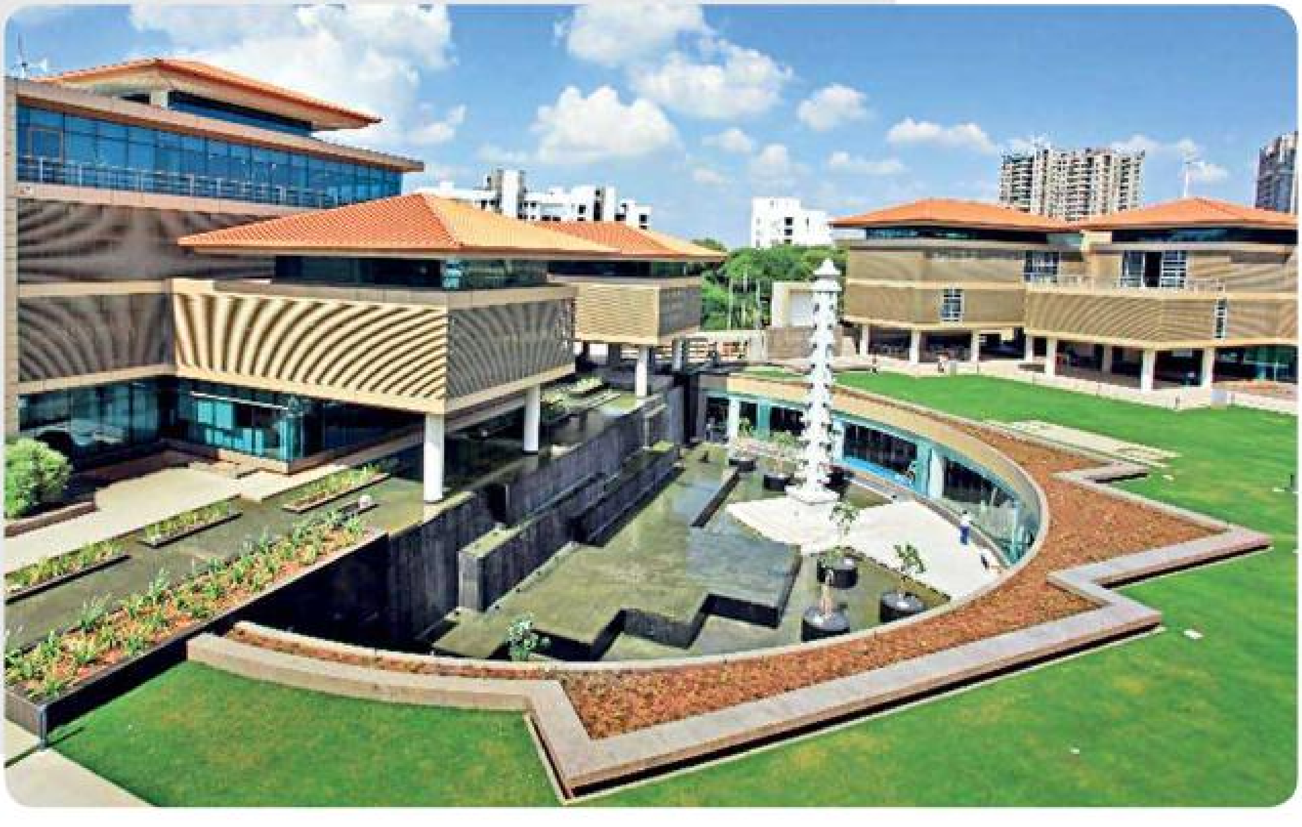
Panchgani, 2018

The Zostel project is a replicable prototype rooted in its context that explores and creates a newfound modern architectural idiom suiting the culture of its typology—that of being a safe and hospitable accommodation for young travellers. With an innovative bid to recycle and re-use, this is architecture that attempts to leave the least impact on the local ecology. The entire project is built around shipping containers that are upcycled and made fresh by a choice of colours, to sit elegantly in the landscape. Designed by Anubha Joshi of Madhav Joshi and Associates, Pune, Zostel's architecture paves the way for a fresh outlook for a flourishing travel and tourism industry.

Suzlon One Earth

Pune, 2009

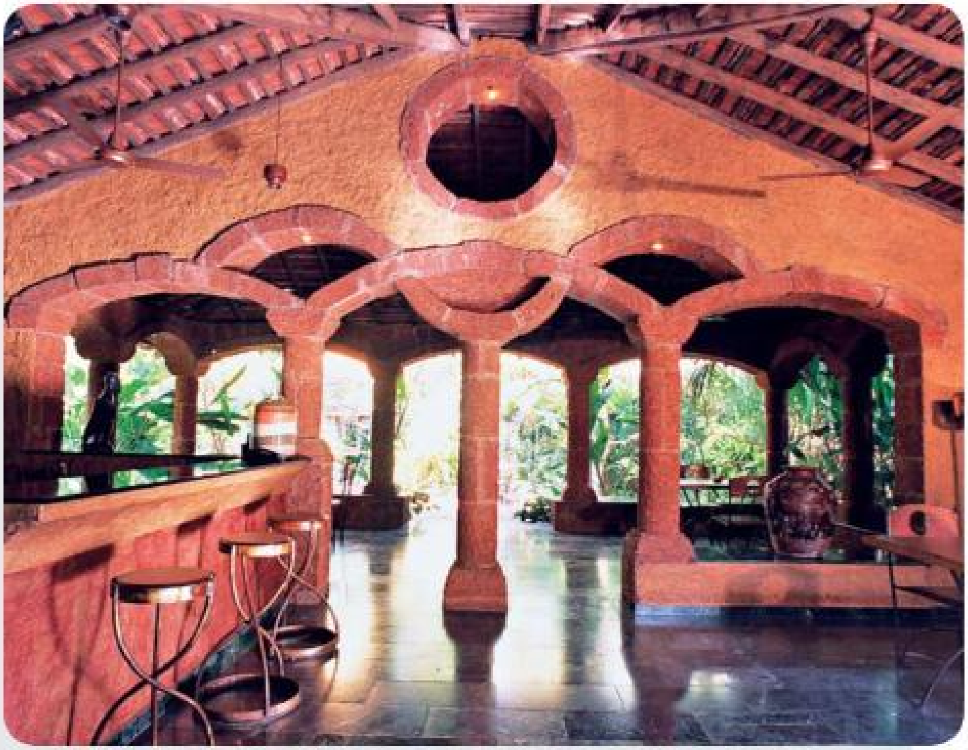
The corporate headquarter of Suzlon One Earth effectively demonstrates the need for global corporations to have sensitively designed buildings that reflect the culture, values and concerns of their environment, and consciously restore a traditional ethos. Deriving its expression from diverse architectural masterpieces from history, like Fatehpur Sikri and the Meenakshi temple at Madurai, the campus makes a welcome heretic statement: that corporate offices need not follow the typical, acceptable vocabulary of a glass-and-chrome highrise. The use of porous and transparent built mass, clubbed with water bodies and landscapes, creates an ideal workplace. Designed by Christopher Benninger of CCBA, it is India's first net-zero architecture that speaks to aesthetic needs but with sustainability.

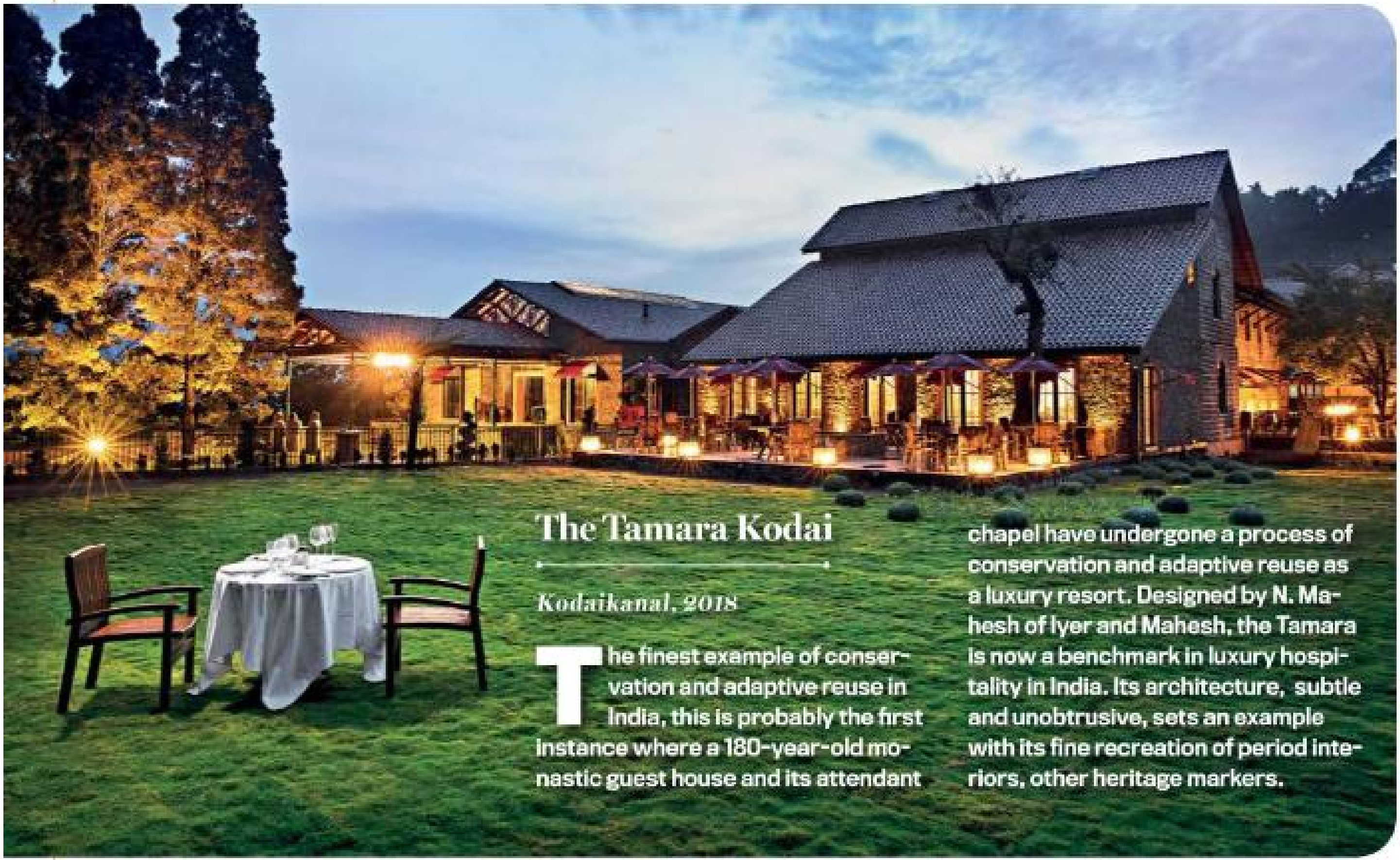


Pousada Tauma

Goa, 1998

Built in local laterite stone, Pousada Tauma—one of the earliest boutique hotels in India—exemplifies a fine blend of two cultures (Portuguese and Indian), explored through architecture and demonstrated through its ethereal spaces. Designed by Dean D'Cruz of Mozaic, it not only sets a model of architectural brevity, but goes a step beyond to demonstrate the true relationship between a local material and how it can be manifested via construction technology in appealing forms.





The Tamara Kodai

Kodaikanal, 2018

The finest example of conservation and adaptive reuse in India, this is probably the first instance where a 180-year-old monastic guest house and its attendant chapel have undergone a process of conservation and adaptive reuse as a luxury resort. Designed by N. Mahesh of Iyer and Mahesh, the Tamara is now a benchmark in luxury hospitality in India. Its architecture, subtle and unobtrusive, sets an example with its fine recreation of period interiors, other heritage markers.

DS GROUP

THE JOURNEY

A ONE OF A KIND EXPERIENTIAL CORPORATE MUSEUM OF DS GROUP

Ravinder Kumar
Chairman, DS Group

Rajiv Kumar
Vice Chairman, DS Group

A multi-business corporation, the DS Group is one of the leading FMCG conglomerate with a strong Indian and international presence. Founded in the year 1929, it is an inspiring and successful business story that blends a remarkable history and legacy with visionary growth.

An experiential museum, The Journey is an artistic representation of the DS Group's very essence and identity. Success is a journey, not a destination.....and a glimpse of this journey has been depicted in the state of the art museum titled 'THE JOURNEY'.

'THE JOURNEY' is more than a museum. It is a multidimensional, multimedia spatial experience spread over almost 10,000 square feet showcasing the DS Group and its origin, present and future. The Journey covers the largest art and design palette possible, making it not just a visual delight but a complete immersive sensorial experience.

The core values of the Group's business and corporate ethos commences as one first enters the Enchanted Forest. This is where the journey of the Group began - sugandh - in the world of aromas and fragrances. As one walks the winding path in the forest, one hears birds softly chirping, the breeze rustling the leaves, a light mist sprays the air above as one gets to know the trees and flowers that bestow those heavenly smells.

The path from the forest then leads into the laboratory and office of the visionary alchemist and entrepreneur, Shri Satyapal. In sight is his life-like self (Statue) at his original workplaces and the visitors are welcomed into the museum by his able inheritors, his sons Mr. Ravinder Kumar, Chairman and Mr. Rajiv Kumar, Vice Chairman.

Chandni Chowk of Delhi is where the roots of the Group lie and one finds oneself in a re-creation of that time and space as one enters the next zone of the museum. Here the sights and sounds of that colourful enclave in the Capital draw the visitors into a world that is most precious. It is the narrative of the origins, the drama of the setbacks and tribulations which gave the founding fathers - Lala Dharampal and Shri Satyapal: after whom the Group is named, the strength, courage and fortitude and forge ahead. Elements of theatre, the movies, hand-painted art married to contemporary technology showcases the history of the Group in a compelling story.

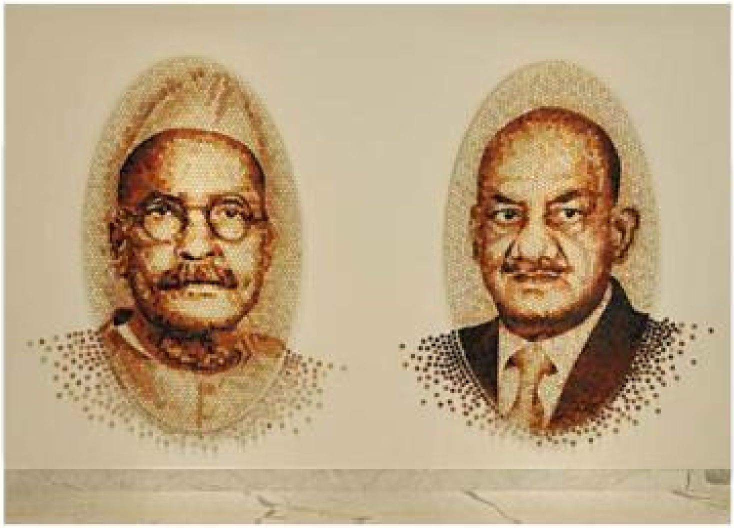
From this show, one moves through a picture corridor with snippets from the past into a 360° projected film or a cyclorama showcasing the continuing narrative of the journey. Presented here are the ideals and aspirations; the move to be leaders in quality, innovation and enterprise.

In high-definition video and surround sound that moves and pulsates all around, transported on the wings of a song as the visitors move along on the journey.

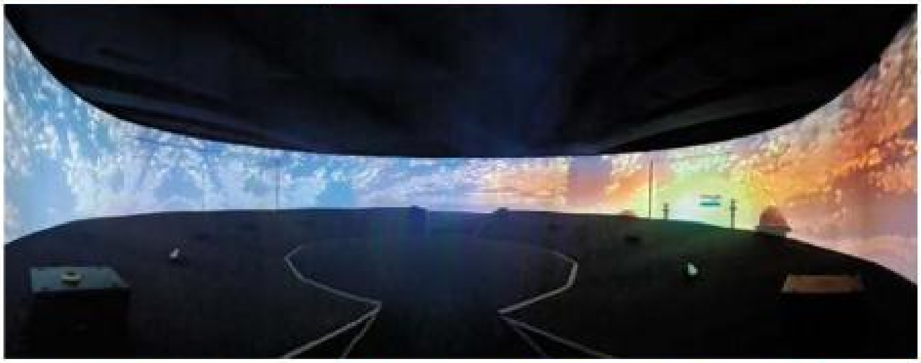
The Journey moves next to the present time. Representational art installations narrate the new stories; give the glimpse of the latest, in an ambience of muted power. In this zone of the museum, the Group's products and brands are appealingly displayed in large glass cubes where graphic art, technology and engineering combine in a form and function to give the visitors an entry into the doorway of the future, poised to leap towards further progress.

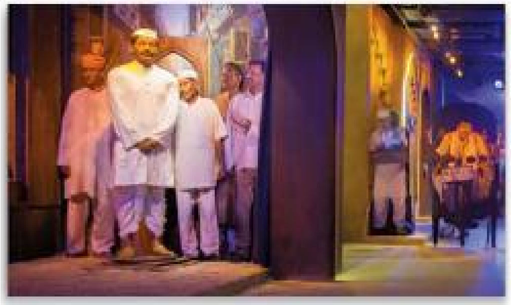
> **"The Journey is our tribute to our founders and their fascinating journey of steadfast principles and unmatched business acumen. The journey that stared at the turn of millennium and spanned the length of entire 20th century. It has been a labour of love that has taken more than a decade to research the archives and to travel far and wide to collect the material and of course a delightful decade of meeting many people who were touched by the lives of Shri Dharampal Ji and Shri Satyapal Ji"**, said Mr. Ravinder Kumar and Mr Rajiv Kumar.

This is the world of DS Group, an organisation which strongly believes in value systems and respect for history. To pay homage and gratitude to their founders, this state of the art museum with global standards is one of its kind in Indian Corporate scenario and a must visit.



THE JOURNEY
THE CORPORATE MUSEUM





By **BHASKAR KOWSHIK**

Advises cultural-heritage organisations on audience-building; Former Project Manager, Google Arts & Culture

An Infinite Canvas for Living Traditions

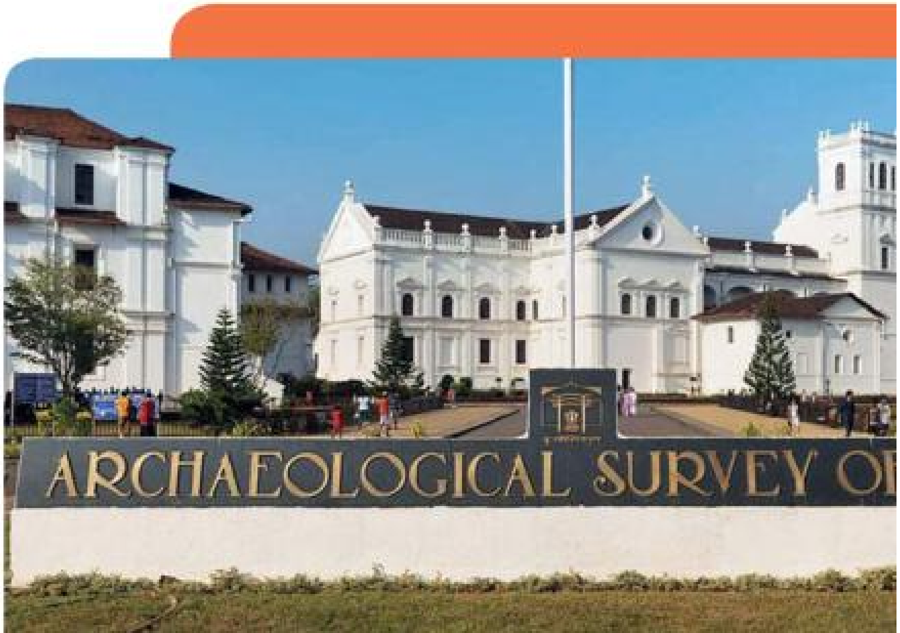
India influenced global tastes and affairs for millennia, with what it imagined, crafted and transacted. Whether in royal collections or temple stores, gathered by connoisseurs or hoarders, India's treasures have always had takers. Today, the country is a vibrant living museum, and our infinite cultures are reflected in innumerable collections at home and overseas. A fast-developing economy is supercharging collectors, and enabling cultural professionals and entrepreneurs. At 75, the museums sector in India is undergoing a renaissance, an apt time to revisit breakthrough museums and archival centres since Independence.

राष्ट्रीय संग्रहालय
NATIONAL MUSEUM

National Museum

New Delhi

Described as 'an ocean' that many a venerable collection has flowed into, the National Museum first took shape in 1949. That Independence Day, an exhibition was mounted at the Rashtrapati Bhavan, of artefacts from Indian institutions returning after a show in London. The assemblage, by gift, loan and circumstance, became the nucleus of the museum. The Harappan section is a delight. With the momentum of India's G20 presidency accelerating, the recently-inaugurated galleries of Buddhist Art and Central Asian Art are expected to be at the top of diplomats' itineraries. **MUST DO:** Sketch the sculptural treasures lining the National Museum corridors

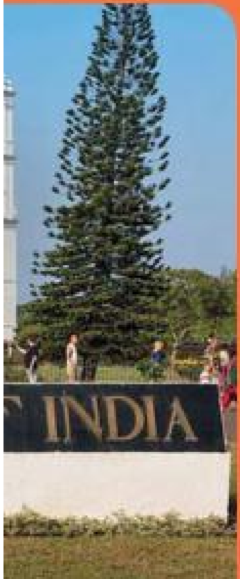


National Gallery of Modern Art

New Delhi

Since 1954, NGMA has led the movement to preserve and promote modern Indian art. Its incomparable collections are the most significant of modern and contemporary art in the country today. With matchless locations (the most recent, in Bengaluru, opened 2009), it is a magnet for aficionados of Indian art from the mid-19th century onward. Its international collaborations too are growing in scope and scale.
MUST GET: Affordable and quality prints at the gift shop

RAJWANT RAWAT



ASI's Site Museums

Conceptualised in the early 1900s, the ASI's site museums are located adjacent to major excavations. They present antiquities in proximity of where the treasures were unearthed, with the goal of stimulating wonder and study amidst context. This network, now 40+, grew significantly post-Independence and offers a vast canvas for tourists and scholars.
MUST VISIT: The Lion Capital at the Sarnath site museum, the ferry-accessible Nagarjunakonda site museum on an island in the Nagarjunasagar reservoir and the museum-as-a-microcosm at Hampi

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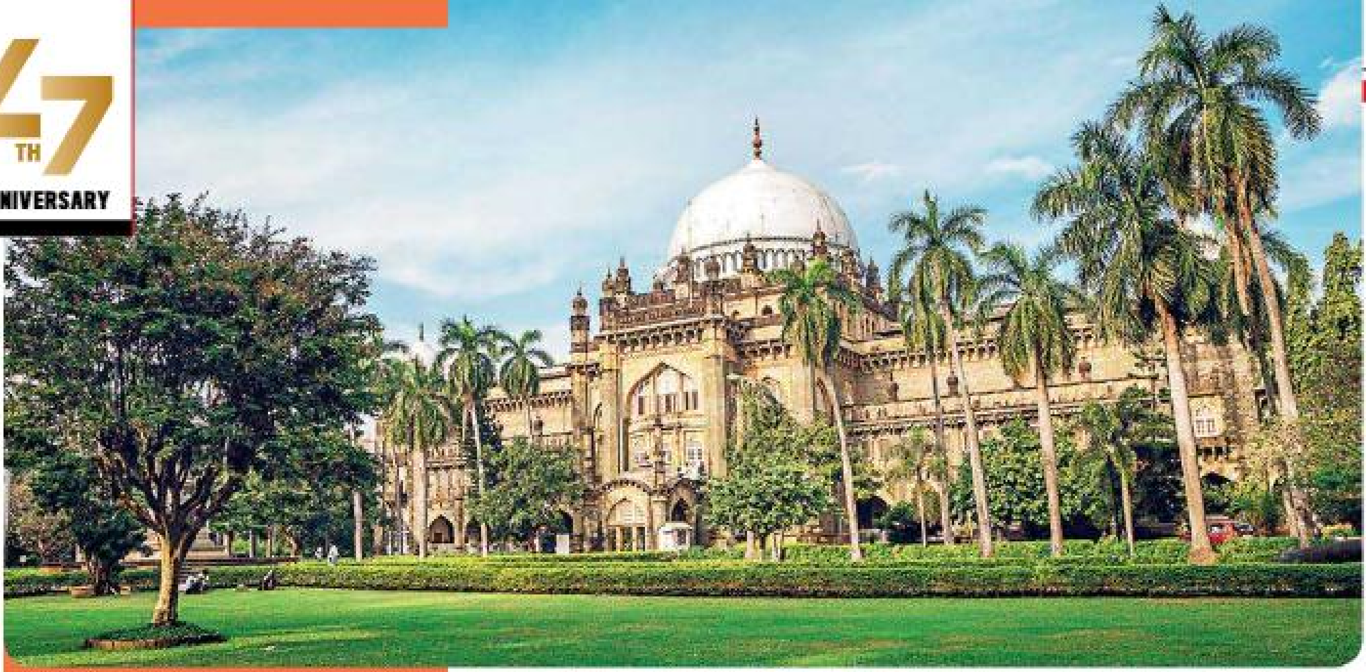


Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Vastu Sangrahalaya

Mumbai

Commemorating its centenary, CSMVS announced a slew of programmes in 2022. An institution that welcomes all, it unveiled educational initiatives, cultural events, digital projects and international collaborations. 'The Museum' (as it is known by friends and admirers) is India's most prominent autonomous cultural heritage institution, and is unaided by government but supported by public-private partnerships.

MUST EXPLORE: Children's Museum presents CSMVS as a canvas to young learners, and collaborates with schools for curriculum enhancement programmes

Dr Bhau Daji Lad Museum

Mumbai

BDL is perhaps the most beautiful museum in the country. Reopened in 2008, after a five-year restoration that reinforced the institution's original intention and character, the award-winning effort addressed the sombre state the institution had lapsed into over the decades. Mumbai's oldest museum, BDL is a trailblazer in education and multilingual outreach.

MOST AWAITED: The museum's expanded digital offerings in 2023

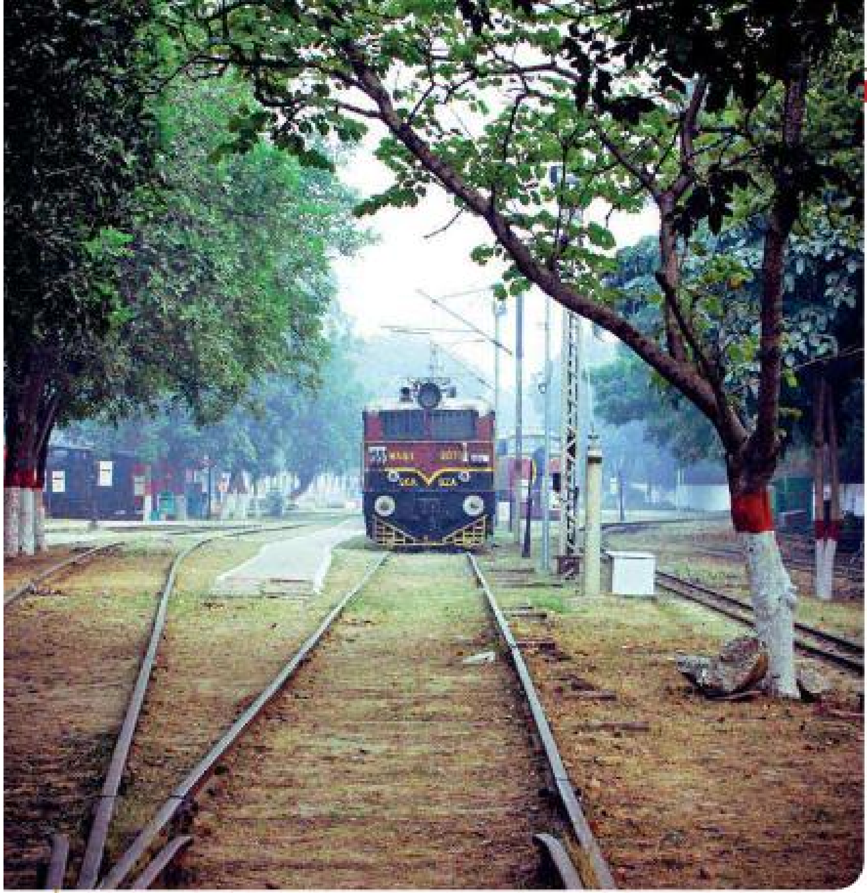
GETTY IMAGES

Mehrangarh Fort and Museum

Jodhpur

India's royal treasuries have attracted wonder through the ages. Following Independence, many palaces and collections were structured into trusts. The Mehrangarh Museum, established 1972, offers glimpses of the royal collection from diverse periods, reflecting court ceremonies and excellence of the ateliers.

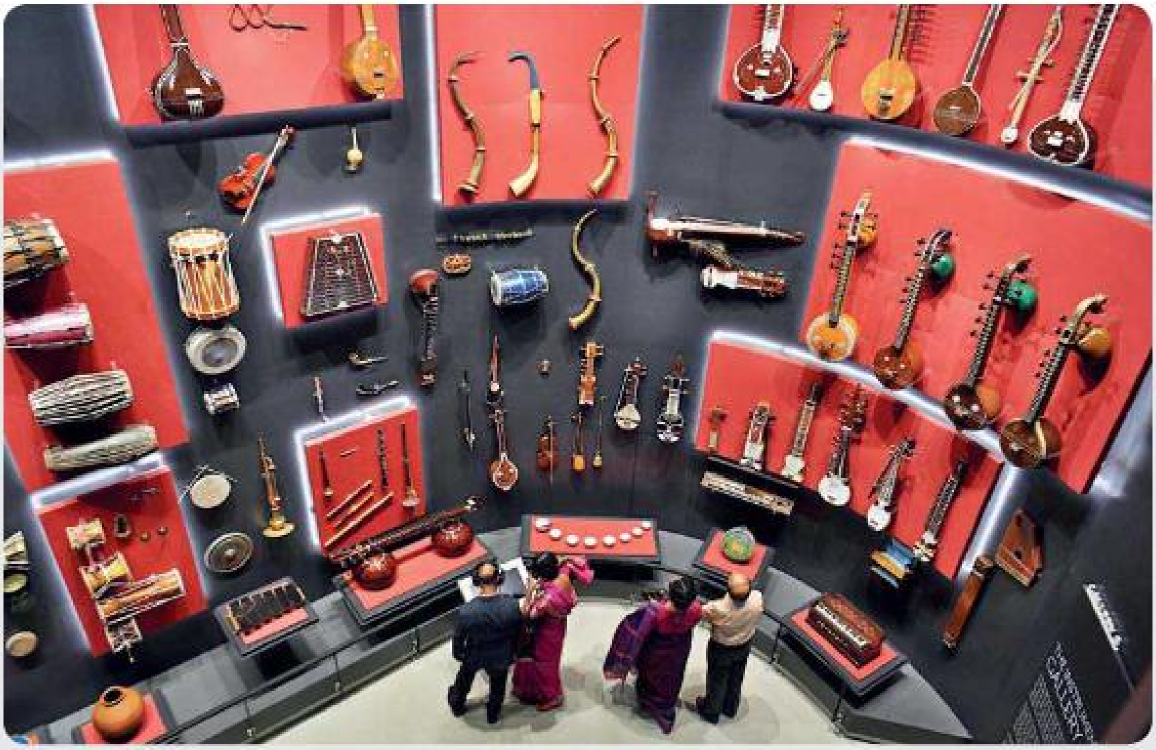
MUST EXPERIENCE: The miniature paintings collection, and music festivals that have Jodhpur's forts as backdrops



National Rail Museum

New Delhi

The lifeline to the nation is a vital but sometimes overlooked aspect of our industrial heritage. A visit to the National Rail Museum rejuvenates the childhood wish of being a train driver and station master, and reminds us of the mountains moved to connect us. Established in 1977, NRM is abuzz each day with that spirit. Increasingly a venue for events aimed at younger audiences, it is the most prominent in the Railways' 30+ network of museums and heritage centres across the country. **DON'T MISS:** The 'Miniature India-HO Scale' model railway is what children's and rail hobbyists' dreams are made of



Indian Music Experience

Bengaluru

India's first interactive music museum, IME introduces visitors to India's diverse music cultures. It approaches the topic's vastness with creativity, persistently offering the ability to touch, listen and learn. The Sound Garden features intriguing installations and sculptural objects that resonate—and even sing—when skilfully played. A series of interactive thematic galleries detail routes through Indian music, ancient to contemporary. Also features a two-storey wall displaying over 100 Indian instruments. **MUST DO:** Find your pitch, frequency and timbre in the Sound Garden's Humming Stone

GETTY IMAGES

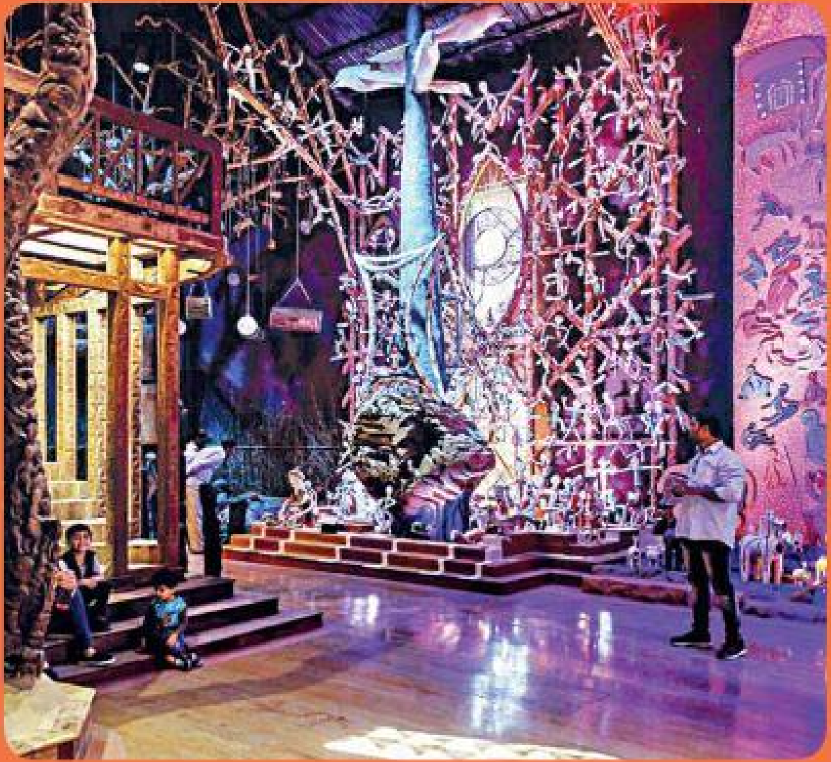
Collector-led Initiatives

Recent breakthroughs in India's museums sector are being led by collectors. Increasingly determined to showcase decades of acquisitions, they're leveraging government's museum schemes and commitments from corporate benefactors. Alongside, ranks of museum professionals and cultural entrepreneurs have expanded. **MOST COMPELLING:** Tarun Thakral's Heritage Transport Museum near Gurugram (*left*), Rezwan Razack's Museum of Indian Paper Money in Bengaluru, Dhaddha Family's Gyan Museum (of jewellery) in Jaipur, Aditya Arya's Museo Camera in Gurugram and Kiran Nadar's eponymous Museum of Art in Delhi

Janjatiya Sangrahalaya

Bhopal

Opened in 2013, this wonder designed by Revathi Kamath is envisioned as a space for Madhya Pradesh's tribes to represent themselves. The approach hinged on the emotion of ecology and on connecting nature and built spaces through the interplay of sun, earth, water and air. With high ceilings painted black as the night sky, the galleries are organised to present tribal life-worlds and communities. **WHY VISIT:** Rooted and soaring, the museum presents living traditions holistically, and is magical



THE NEW AGE UNIVERSITIES

CREATING FUTURE THROUGH TECHNOLOGY, INNOVATION & ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Dynamism defines today's academic and professional environment. If India has to achieve its goal of doubling gross enrolment ratio (GER) from the current 26.3% to 50% by 2035, the Technology & Innovation has to play a big role. With artificial intelligence, robots, automation, socio-political movements, climate change etc. exercising a huge say in what now is an increasingly volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous world, the nature of jobs are constantly undergoing changes. Alive to the urgency of the scenario, India has a number of private universities keeping pace with the changing times. These New Age universities have developed a curriculum keeping in mind the most in demand skills that one should equip oneself with for the future in order to thrive in one's careers.

Indian brainpower, by occupying key positions, is playing a huge role in decision making of global consequence. The conditions are ripe for India to play an even more important part in the global knowledge system. The arena of Indian higher education is set to experience more fast-paced growth in the times to come – with growing interest being expressed by leading global universities and nations holding the top spot in the domain of higher education. India has caught the attention of the world with governments and universities from all over the world eager to collaborate and sign memoranda of understanding in the fields of research collaboration, joint degrees and initiatives to advance returns from higher education.

With the introduction of the NEP 2020, India has its eyes set on the goal of doubling gross enrolment rates from the current 26.3% to 50% by 2035. Majority Indian youth is enrolled in private colleges at the undergraduate level. The huge response to Private Universities as top choices among leading educational institutions in the country in **Common University Entrance Test (CUET)** is a testimony of growing influence of private universities among students in the country. **CUET** which is being conducted for the first time in the country for admission to undergraduate courses for the session 2022-23 in 86 universities, including central universities saw second highest number of applications received for any entrance examination in the country. As a private university, Galgotias University has received around 4 lakh applications under **CUET** scheme thus earning the distinction of being among the overall top 10 educational institutions in terms of applications received. According to a 2021 study published in the Journal of Higher Education Policy and Leadership Studies authored by Prof Furqan Qamar of Jamia Millia Islamia, private universities constitute over 30 per cent of the total higher education institutes in India. Leading the list of private Indian Universities are Galgotias University, Amity University, Manipal Academy of Higher Education, BITS, J.S.S. Academy of Technical Education, the LNM Institute of Information Technology, Dr. D. Y. Patil Vidyapeeth, Nirma University, Amrita Vishwa Vidyapeetham and Symbiosis International. Upholding the highest integrity, professionalism, and ethical values are the hallmarks of these new age universities.

TECHNOLOGY: SHAPING THE FUTURE

As technology advances, we see education progressing towards a better phase. In a world where technology is predicted to become smarter than it ever was, some see technological changes as a challenge. When academia incorporates new tech into the curriculum, it serves to train the youth to integrate ideas from multiple settings which will be crucial to address the problems of tomorrow. To have future ready youth, some of the institutes of higher education have developed a cross-disciplinary ecosystem designed to inculcate adaptability in the students. The courses being offered align with the concept of imparting key competencies to navigate the future of work and learning. The global scenario is complex today with unique problems and challenges which cannot be solved in the traditional academic silos but through a multidisciplinary ecosystem approach. Some

DR. S.B. MUJUMDAR
Chancellor
Symbiosis University

AZIM PREMJI
Founder
Azim Premji University

SRI MATA AMRITANANDAMAYI DEV
Chancellor
Amrita Vishwa Vidyapeetham

LAKSHMI N. MITTAL
Chancellor
LNMIIT

SUNEEL GALGOTIA
Chancellor
Galgotias University

> Galgotias University was born out of a dream. A dream for India to redefine higher education in India. Our Vision is to empower young India and young people for a sustainable and better future of mankind. We are committed to fulfill the dream of our Prime Minister Narendra Modi to make India a 'vishwaguru'.
>
> **— Suneel Galgotia, Chancellor, Galgotias University**

private universities have incorporated this approach in designing their curriculum which is future oriented.

For example at Galgotias University the focus is on helping the learners identify their natural skills through a strategically designed curriculum which trains them for the future. In fact Galgotias Educational Institutions (GEI) have been inculcating practical skills and creating 'Global Professionals' for more than 15 years now. Galgotias is a technology and research-driven university which envisions creating problem solvers. The university, with its interdisciplinary approach toward education, offers various courses spread over 13 schools, and 19 Departments with 100+ programs in Polytechnic, Undergraduate, Postgraduate and PhD programs. The university offers B.Tech in multiple branches such as Computing Science and Engineering, Computer and Information Sciences, Civil Engineering, Mechanical Engineering, Biosciences and Biomedical Engineering to name a few. The curriculum encourages project-based learning to design practical solutions and research-based learning to develop solutions for real-life issues.

Another example is BITS which envisions creating ethical leaders and problem-solvers who apply their knowledge in technology and science to make a transformational impact worldwide. While promoting research-driven education, the university aims to nurture the next generation of fearless leaders who can solve the world's most challenging problems. Integrated First Degree Courses Offered in BITS are considered to be integrated degrees for two reasons. One reason is that the degree program includes several cross-disciplinary common courses such as basic math & science and secondly no intermediate degree like B.Sc., B.Sc. (Hons.), B.A., B.A. (Hons), etc. is awarded. They are modular in structure and academic requirements are spelt out in terms of the number of courses studied rather than the number of years.

At Shiv Nadar a strong emphasis is placed on interdisciplinary research that cuts across academic programs. This has enabled the University to break disciplinary silos and institute a broad-based pedagogical structure. The synergy between teaching and research is the stronghold, rooted in the belief and efforts towards the creation of knowledge (by researching) and not just disseminating it (by teaching). The variety of courses, being offered by the School of Engineering and School of Natural Sciences, are in line with the University's mission to be at the forefront of the creation of new knowledge and new forms of creative expression through setting the core research agenda of the programs ranging from basic and fundamental studies to applied and creative research.

ENTREPRENEURSHIP: GROOMING THE LEADERS

An early lesson in entrepreneurship education teaches students the underlying principles of starting a business, how to avoid common pitfalls, pitch ideas more effectively, validate their product, develop a solid business model and set themselves up for success in a field where failure is common.. Early entrepreneurship programs for students help them gain the experience of starting and running their own business, teaching them invaluable lessons about leadership, creative problem solving, critical thinking, and communication-all of which are invaluable for surviving in this competitive world. The activities undertaken by the innovation and entrepreneurship cell of a university speaks volumes about its thrust on creating the shapers of the future.

It sets a few leading names apart from the crowd. An example for which is the Atal Incubation Centre

GALGOTIAS UNIVERSITY ACHIEVES THE HIGHEST BENCHMARK TOWARDS ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE

- **Galgotias University is the only private university in Uttar Pradesh with the highest NAAC score and the second highest amongst state private universities in the entire country with NAAC score of 3.37 out of 4 awarded by NAAC.**
- **The University has been granted with 12 B Status by University Grants Commission (UGC).**
- **Ranked Amongst TOP 100 Universities in Management & Pharmacy 2021 and Ranked Amongst 150-200 Rank Band in Overall Rankings in India by NIRF.**
- **Listed in the Band "Excellent" for "Innovation and Entrepreneurship Development" and Ranked 2nd & 46th respectively in UP & India amongst top universities in India in the AIIRA Ranking 2021.**
- **NBA Accreditation: The Highest Benchmark of Academic Excellence, Placements & Research.**

GALGOTIAS UNIVERSITY

INNOVATION

NURTURING PROBLEM SOLVERS

In our rapidly changing world, innovation is the key to our long term survival. An individual who understands the importance of innovation will be able to take measured risks and identify opportunities for improvement therefore the sooner the students are encouraged to explore innovative ways of thinking, the better equipped they will be for the future. Some of the leading universities are actively providing the resources to promote a local innovation ecosystem in the campus. The innovation cells at these universities provide a forum to the students to work on their business ideas and further nurture their viable business proposals into reality.

Galgotias University since its inception has laid a strong emphasis on building a league of thinkers who make products by solving problems for India and the world. It has a dedicated Incubation Center of its own known as "Galgotias Incubation Centre for Research Innovation Start-up and Entrepreneurship (GICRISE)". GIC-RISE provides all the essential support to student start-ups by incubating them. Apart from providing various services as mentioned above, GIC-RISE also organises various programs such as Start-up Bootcamp, Start-up Fellowship, Pitch Competition, Start-up School and Start-up Expo. They serve to develop an innovative ecosystem powered by experiential learning and also foster business models based on the latest technology. Several initiatives have been undertaken by the university to enhance Patent Filing Activity. The university has constituted "GU Innovator of the Month Award" for students of GALGOTIAS UNIVERSITY & respective schools for both UG and PG levels. The Research and Development activities which may lead to patent filing are encouraged by the university. It provides essential resources such as Seed Money for R&D, Collaborative Research, Evaluation of Research by Industry experts, and organization of Joint Conferences with Industry. The university boasts of numerous Research Scholars working on industry-based problems.

At Amrita Vishwa Vidyapeetham too innovation is incentivised. The institute organized its first-ever edition of the Amrita Innovation & Research Awards (AIRA) on April 8, 2021. Awards were given in six categories to recognize and honor the university's outstanding faculty, including Chancellor's Research Excellence Award, New Discovery & Innovation Labs, Chancellor's Innovation Award, Chancellor's Publication Excellence Award, Publication Merit Award, and Certificate of Appreciation for Research. Amrita Vishwa Vidyapeetham has also announced a grant of ₹100 crores ($13,400,000 US) to set up 50 state-of-the-art New Discovery and Innovation Labs at its campuses across India.

> “The main purpose of education should be to impart a culture of the heart”
>
> **— Amma, Mata Amritanadamayi**
> **Chancellor, Amrita Vishwa Vidyapeetham**

at Shiv Nadar University, Delhi NCR. It is a tech-agnostic hardware-focused premier incubation centre established in 2017 with the support of AIM Niti Aayog to foster the culture of innovation and entrepreneurship across the length and breadth of the country. The incubated startups are not only at an advantage because of the business resources and technical assistance, but they also benefit from a supportive and conducive community with vibrant academia who lead and inspire them to build a sustainable business model that stands out in the competitive environment. To encourage and create an entrepreneurship culture in the university, especially among students, AIC closely works with the student-led Entrepreneurship Cell (E-Cell). Being a tech-agnostic incubator, AIC focuses on start-ups working in the realm of deep tech which spans across Industry 4.0, Robot and Robotic Process Automation, Additive Manufacturing, Life Science, EV & Power Batteries, Women-Led Startups, Space Tech, and Health Tech etc.

Galgotias University has also set up an Innovation cell to safeguard intellectual property rights and add value to national Intellectual property. The university's Innovation Cell (IIC) was set up under MoE's Innovation Cell in 2018-19. IIC-Galgotias University organized 17+ events in collaboration with the Entrepreneurship Cell, IPR Cell, Startup Cell and various schools of the University. The Student Entrepreneurship Cell (e-Cell) has more than 30 members from various schools. E-Cell actively promotes entrepreneurial thinking and injects confidence in students to float their own ventures. Every year to promote an active entrepreneurial

> “The emergence of Galgotias University among the top 8 most preferred universities in the country in terms of number of applications received in CUET, shows the credibility and commitment of the University towards higher education. The university has achieved many honours at National & International level and is standing among top institutions in NIRF, NAAC, ARIIA, NBA & 12 B.”
>
> **— Dhruv Galgotia, CEO, Galgotias University**

> When academia incorporates new tech into the curriculum, it serves to train the youth to integrate ideas from multiple settings which will be crucial to address the problems of tomorrow.

> “Integrating technology with class-room education generally produces better academic outcomes than employing either technique alone."
>
> **— ARADHANA GALGOTIA, DIRECTOR-OPERATIONS, Galgotias University**

ecosystem on campus, the E-Cell organizes workshops with focus on Entrepreneurship, Innovation competition, Start-up Boot-Camp, TED-Talks, Start-up roadshows and many such activities which kindles the spirit of entrepreneurship amongst students. Some of the flagship events under innovation & entrepreneurship initiatives are; Galgotias InnoFest, National Start-up Case Study Competition, and Galgotias Pitch. The university also houses GCTII - 'Galgotias Centre for Technical Innovation & Incubation', a technology-driven business incubator & Entrepreneurship (e) - Cell within the premises of GCET. It has been envisioned to become a world-class technology-driven incubator and provide a universal platform for research and development for the benefit of budding entrepreneurs, corporate houses and the society at large. It provides 4 kinds of funding options- Prism Fund, Seed Fund, Startup Fund and Stand fund.

Pilani Innovation & Entrepreneurship Development Society (PIEDS) on the other hand is an autonomous not-for-profit society registered in 2013 under The Rajasthan Societies Registration Act, 1958. The centre has consistently been involved in actively nurturing technology and knowledge-based ventures through their start-up phase by providing the necessary mentoring support at all the stages be it ideation / prototype / patent / marketing / or the commercialization. The BITS Innovation and Startup Policy for Students and Faculty enables the institution to actively engage the stakeholders in strengthening an innovation and entrepreneurship ecosystem through a guiding framework. Nearly a dozen BITSian unicorns today are contributing substantially in the start-up canvas of the country.

These forward-thinking new age universities are propelling India on the path to growth. Through the NEP 2020, India is on the road to emerging as an academic power in the near future. In India's journey to becoming a knowledge hub, private universities are beginning to play an increasingly important role via research and innovation. By creating a productive academic environment for the most talented academics through careful attention, good organisation and adequate funding, they are grooming the Indian youth for a brighter future. In the modern world, where the main challenges are multidisciplinary, high-quality innovation and research require institutions to have multiple disciplines in the same university and this is evident through the meticulously planned curriculum of Galgotais, Shiv Nadar, BITS among others.

SYMBIOSIS INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY

AZIM PREMJI UNIVERSITY

AMRITA VISHWA VIDYAPEETHAM

LNM INSTITUTE OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

> “Technology is a very powerful tool that can enable millions of students to gain access to quality education"
>
> **— Byju Raveendran, Founder & CEO Byju's**

Chariots of Fire, Steel and Gold

For a sports-crazy nation, India has too slender a haul of world-conquering moments. Here are a few, all forged in fire

By **PRADEEP MAGAZINE**

Veteran journalist and author

INDIA PICTURE

Hockey Gold

London Olympics, 1948

A year into independence, India got a chance to test its traditional stick sorcery in a new age...also to see whether Partition had left it diminished. Despite that vivisected might, both sides were still individually so strong that India was widely expected to meet Pakistan in the final. But Great Britain, to everyone's surprise, beat Pakistan in the semis, and India ended up facing off against its old colonial rulers. So a chance to demonstrate superpower status was doubly sweet. The wizard Dhyan Chand, in his 40s, had just signed off on serious hockey, despite scoring 61 goals in 22 matches in East Africa in November '47. But the mesmerising skill and speed of another legend, Balbir Singh Sr, who scored two goals in the final, was enough to help India rout GB 4-0 for its first Olympic gold after Independence.

Milkha Singh

Rome Olympics, 1960

Milkha Singh's legacy goes beyond the trails he blazed. The 'Flying Sikh' epitomised the struggles of someone torn by the riots of 1947. A teenager left orphaned and uprooted, it was from that nowhere space that he overcame all odds to craft a future. Milkha started running only after he joined the army, in 1951, and within a few years, became one of the top 400m sprinters in the world. His feat at Rome 1960 remains among the greatest by any Indian track athlete. The time he clocked then, 45.6 seconds, was a national record for 38 years. Finishing fourth in a photo-finish was technically a loss, but the tracks he ran on to reach there were made of fire.

Photographs by GETTY IMAGES

ODI World Cup

1983

Indian cricket had arrived in 1971, beating England in England for the first time, then crafting an away win against the Windies. Sunil Gavaskar's blend of class and appetite for runs invited comparisons with the legendary Bradman. It was as if we were bodily lifted from the mofussil and granted the highest nobility. Then another supernova burst on the horizon—at Pavilion End, rather. Kapil Dev was the sinew India had lacked. The past seemed like a chronicle of wimpishness as his bombastic bat and seaming red ball electrified the cricket-crazy masses. Even so, no punter would've put a penny on his boys at the ODI World Cup in England. Kapil's Devils reaching the finals at Lord's, then beating the mighty Windies, was nothing short of a natal moment for new India.

PEPSI
NOKIA

T20 World Cup

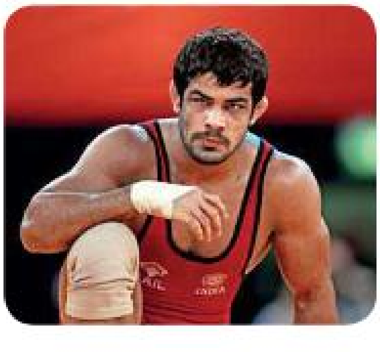
2007

India, now seen as the home of the IPL, was originally a laggard in the shortest format of the game, being totally addicted to an ODI diet for a quarter century. The T20 World Cup 2007 in South Africa changed everything—even if India was a reluctant participant. M.S. Dhoni's youthful team, bristling with energy and resembling the gleaming machines of the new health industry they were groomed amidst, proved equal to the task of producing the always-on turbo power and superquick reflexes T20 demanded. The unlikely victory against Pakistan in the final changed India all over again; within a year, it had launched the cash-rich Indian Premier League that was to transform the face of world cricket forever.

Sushil Kumar's Bronze and Silver

Beijing, London Olympics: 2008-12

Tradition gives wrestling a special place in India's sporting imagination. Unsurprisingly, our first individual Olympic medallist was a wrestler, K.D. Jadhav. But it took 56 years for a second. Tradition itself was an albatross: generations struggled to adjust to the speed of modern wrestling. And they gave Greco-Roman—which disallows below-the-waist holds—a total miss, focusing on freestyle, akin to the old Indian style. Enter Sushil Kumar... and Yogeshwar Dutt (London), Sakshi Malik (Rio 2016), Ravi Dahiya and Bajrang Punia (Tokyo 2020) were soon strutting over those foam mats.



P.V. Sindhu's Silver and Bronze

Rio, Tokyo Olympics: 2016-20

Prakash Padukone, All England champion and World No. 1 in 1980. Pullela Gopichand, All England 2001.... India's badminton superstars seemed to come like a very occasional smash at the net before Saina Nehwal announced her arrival with a bronze at the 2012 London Olympics. That event spoke of how Gopichand's coaching was revolutionising Indian badminton. The tall and lithe P.V. Sindhu seemed to embody a whole new generation that played on the world stage as if to the manner born. Her two Olympics feats and India's 2022 Thomas Cup for men now frame a present where we now have a complete game.

M.C. Mary Kom's World Championships

Six titles and 2012 Olympic bronze

Boxing has for long been seen as a lesser sport in India and, more crucially, one meant for men. Our first Olympic medal came at Beijing in 2008, and that it came courtesy the beefy six-footer Vijender Singh did no harm to that macho aura of the sport. But after the diminutive M.C. Mary Kom from Manipur let loose her series of punches, even stereotypes were left bleeding. Let's just say being six-time world champion is decent reach for a 5'2" woman, who came back even after maternity to secure a bronze at the London Olympics.

Abhinav Bindra's Shooting Gold

Beijing Olympics, 2008

India has always had a shooting pedigree, but an Olympic medal was elusive until Rajyavardhan Singh Rathore's silver at Athens 2004. It was left to Abhinav Bindra to get history itself in his crosshairs—as the first individual gold medalist ever from India in a tough global arena.

AP

Neeraj Chopra's Javelin Gold

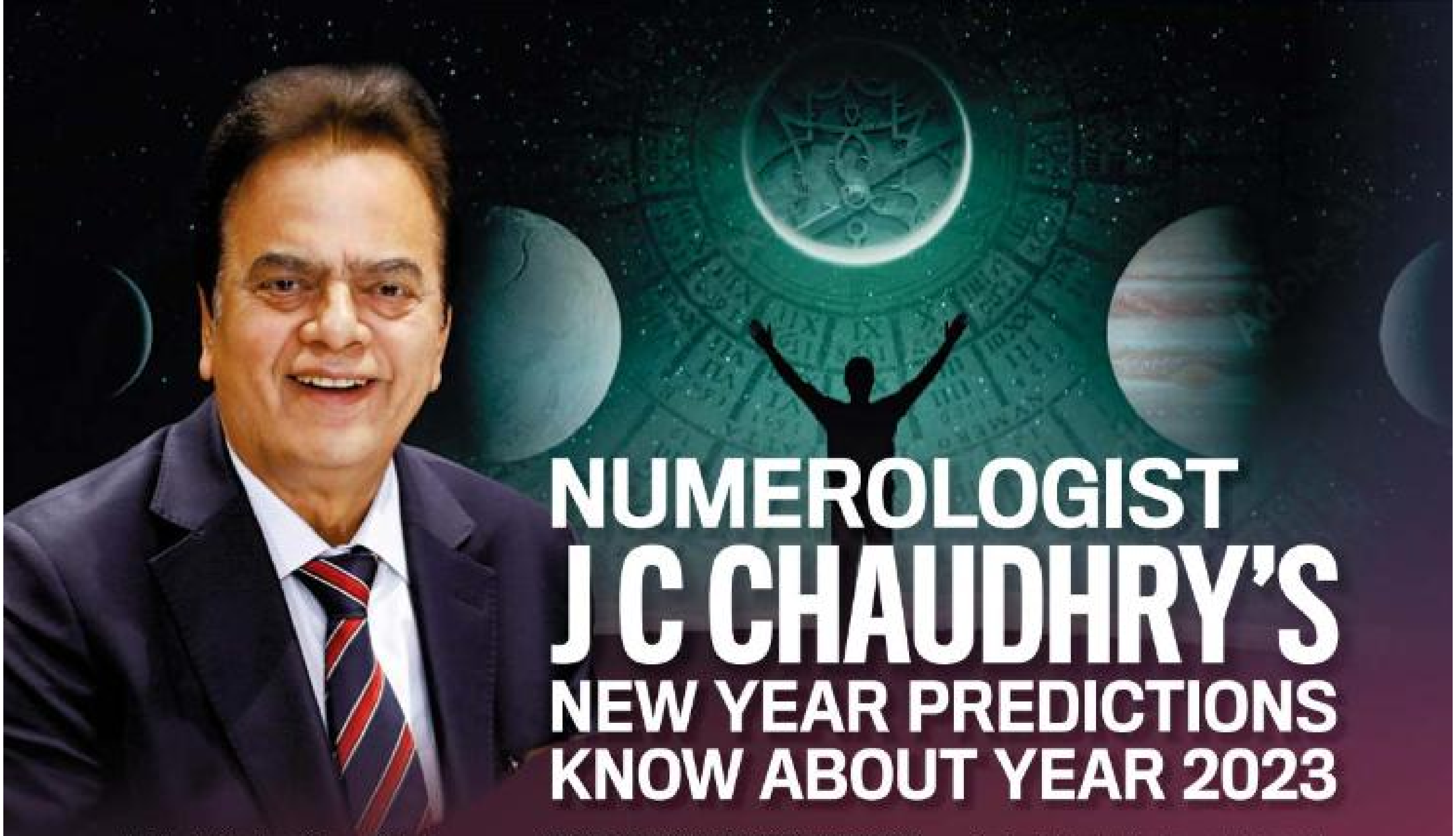
Tokyo Olympics, 2020

Till Neeraj's gold-encrusted throw of 87.58m in 2020, India's brush with fame in blue-ribbon disciplines was Milkha's 1960 feat at Rome and Anju Bobby George's long jump bronze in 2003 at the Paris World Championships. Neeraj's javelin, flying from Haryana's dusty Panipat to Tokyo glory, humility and grace intact, is one of India's greatest sporting stories ever.

Viswanathan Anand's World Titles

2000 and 2007-2012

The broad consensus deems India to be the home of chess. But that was in another *yuga*. In modern times, it took till the bespectacled Viswanathan Anand single-handedly broke the Russian check before we had anything to talk about. And there's been a lot to talk about since. Three more crowns for Anand, and the many grandmasters, men and women, who ruled the 64 squares in his wake.



NUMEROLOGIST J C CHAUDHRY'S NEW YEAR PREDICTIONS KNOW ABOUT YEAR 2023

"Just like the Sun, Moon, Stars, and Galaxies, Numbers also surround us. "Numbers from 1 to 9 govern our lives. These 9 Numbers are ruled by 9 Planets, and they influence the course of life. Numerology is the study of these numbers and their relationship with coincident events in life. Numerology science examines the three fundamental numbers, namely the Name Number, Psychic/Driver/Birth Number, and Destiny/Conductor/Life Path Number. It is because a person's name and date of birth are extremely important in their lives. A person is born on a particular day not by chance but due to the interplay of numbers and planets. Also, the name is the identity that uniquely identifies the person and continues to live even after they have become mortal. So, numerology reveals the underlying meaning behind these numbers and their connection with abundance, happiness, and prosperity in life.

HOW CAN NUMEROLOGY ASSIST YOU IN LIVING A BETTER LIFE?

Numerology unveils a person's life blueprint. It highlights the friendly and unfriendly numbers, characteristics, opportunities, challenges, remedies to mitigate the negative effect of numbers, etc., so as to make decisive decisions and lead a life with the least resistance and maximum comfort. For example, if a person is ruled by Number 7 then, his friendly numbers will be 1, 2, 4, and 5, and unfriendly numbers will be 3, 6, 7, 8, and 9. Unfriendly numbers have negative vibrations and cause problems in life. It is best to avoid these numbers when planning to get married, making investments, starting a job, business etc. Numerology is the tool to attain this wisdom and increase the chances of success by incorporating friendly numbers. The favourable results in every sphere of life will help elevate the lifestyle.

OVERVIEW OF LAST YEAR'S (2022) NUMEROLOGY PREDICTIONS BY DR. J C CHAUDHRY

The year 2022 (2+0+2+2= 6) was number 6, ruled by Venus, a soft planet. In 2022, there were three 2s, and the Moon is the planet of Number 2. The Moon is a weak and fluctuating planet. As a result, the effects of Venus and the Moon were felt throughout 2022. Dr. J C Chaudhry predicted that it will be an emotionally depressive year where suicidal tendencies will increase. His predictions came true, as there were several new stories of suicide among the younger generation and rising mental health issues. He also said in his 2022 prediction video that the year will be progressive for the entertainment, banking, tour and travel, and IT industries. And, once again, the predictions were correct. Tourism gained momentum, and the film and banking industries performed well.

NUMEROLOGY PREDICTIONS FOR THE NEW YEAR 2023

The year 2023 is a Number 7 (2+0+2+3=7) year, with number 2 coming twice. Number 2 is influenced by the Moon, and like last year, 2023 can be an emotionally and psychologically weak year. From July, the period can be stressful for those in the job sector, but things will be better at the end of 2023. On the progressive front, there will be advancement in the arts and photography fields, and creative work like designing will be in demand.

2023 FOR INDIA

India's banking and finance sector can witness ups and downs this year, but it can grow in many other sectors. India performed well in Sports in 2022, and this year may also be favourable for the country, but players will have to work hard to achieve the desired results.

ADVANCEMENTS EXPECTED IN 2023

- Fields of arts and photography can boom with the help of technology.
- Creative fields related to decor and designer will be favoured.
- This year will be beneficial for people in the import and export industries.
- Other industries that will see a progress and upward graph include: entertainment industry, tours & travels, online business, IT sector, etc.
- Companies manufacturing and selling computers and laptops can grow.

CHALLENGES PREDICTED FOR 2023

- Due to the influence of planet Moon because of number 2 coming twice in the year 2023, individuals may suffer from tension, depression, and other mental health issues.
- Year 2023 (Number 7), the Number of Ketu (Neptune) is also called a mysterious number, so we can expect some mysteries hidden as well, because of Number 7.

TIPS BY DR. J C CHAUDHRY TO OVERCOME THE NEGATIVES OF 2023

- Keep yourself busy with new things to keep stressful thoughts away and be happy in life.
- Number 7 belongs to spirituality. Indulge in meditation and spiritual activities for a calm mind.
- Keep children away from laziness as an idle mind is a devil's workshop.
- Try to be of service to mankind and help needy as much as you can for inner peace and happiness.

2023 NUMEROLOGY PREDICTIONS FOR PSYCHIC NUMBER 1 TO 9

↗ Number 1

People born on dates 1, 10, 19, 28 of any month belong to Number 1. Sun is the ruling planet of Number 1.

- Number 1 people are ambitious and great leaders.
- Career wise, this can be a good year. You may get new job opportunities or hike in current job.

- This can be a good year for people in technology, online, internet fields or in business can do better.

2023 WILL BE A LUCKY YEAR FOR NUMBER 1.

Lucky Day: Sunday

Lucky Dates: Except 6,15,24,8,17,26 all other dates in any month will be lucky.

Lucky Months: January, February, March, April, May, July, September, October, November and December.

Lucky Colour: Orange/Red

Number 2

People born on dates 2, 11, 20, 29 of any month belong to Number 2. Moon is the ruling planet of Number 2.

- Number 2 people are gentle and feminine.
- If you are doing any investment, forget it for long time to gain maximum benefits.
- If you are looking to start a new job or business/startup etc., this can be a good year for you.
- Don't ignore your health. Eat healthy only to stay away from doctors' bills.

2023 WILL BE A LUCKY YEAR FOR NUMBER 2.

Lucky Day: Monday

Lucky Dates: Except 2,11,20,29, 5,14,23, 6,15,24 all other dates in any month will be lucky.

Lucky Months: January, March, April, July, August, September, October and December.

Lucky Colour: White

Number 3

People born on dates 3, 12, 21, or 30 of any month belong to Number 3. Number 3 is ruled by Jupiter.

- Number 3 people are ambitious and creative.
- Focus on the things at hand. Ignoring your work can hamper your performance at the workplace.
- You need to be careful this year if doing any investments.

2023 WILL BE AN AVERAGE YEAR FOR NUMBER 3.

Lucky Day: Thursday

Lucky Dates: Except 4,13,22,31,7,16,25 all other dates in any month will be lucky.

Lucky Months: January, February, March, May, June, August, September, October, November and December.

Lucky Colour: Yellow

Number 4

People born on dates 4, 13, 22, or 31 of any month belong to Number 4. Uranus is the ruling planet of Number 4.

- Number 4 people are helpful, have creative minds and good speaking skills.
- You can perform well compared to last year, if you are in real estate, hotel or any similar industry.
- Marriage relationships will improve and bloom.
- This year can bring new job opportunities and chances of promotions for you.

2023 WILL BE A LUCKY YEAR FOR NUMBER 4.

Lucky Day: Sunday

Lucky Dates: Except 3,12,21,30,4,13,22,31,8,17, 26 all other dates in any month will be lucky.

Lucky Months: January, February, May, June, July, September, October, November.

Lucky Colour: Grey

Number 5

People born on dates 5, 14, or 23 of any month belong to Number 5. Mercury is the ruling planet of Number 5.

- 5 Number people are courageous, good communicators and planners.
- Your hard work can give you better growth this year.
- Family relations will be improved.
- You can think of financial investments this year.

2023 WILL BE A LUCKY YEAR FOR NUMBER 5.

Lucky Day: Wednesday

Lucky Dates: Except 2,11,20,29 all other dates in any month will be lucky.

Lucky Months: January, March, April, May, June, July, August, September, October and December.

Lucky Colour: Green

Number 6

People born on dates 6, 15, or 24 of any month belong to Number 6. Venus is the ruling planet of Number 6.

- Number 6 people spend more on luxury but this year be little careful and don't do any over spending.
- Don't involve yourself in any conflicts.
- Try to maintain a balance between home and office.
- Financial investments are not recommended as this year you may not get the expected returns.

2023 will be an average year for Number 6

Lucky Day: Friday

Lucky Dates: Except 1,2,6,7,10,11,15,16,19,20,24, 25,28,29 all other dates in any month will be lucky.

Lucky Months: March, April, May, August, September and December.

Lucky Colour: White/Light Blue

Number 7

People born on dates 7, 16, or 25 of any month belong to Number 7. Neptune is the ruling planet of Number 7.

- Number 7 people are creative, spiritual, and have good thinking power.
- Direct your energies in positive direction to get desired results. Try to stay away from bad habits as it can bring troubles for you.
- Give time to your health and family. It would be best if you focus more on your child's well-being this year.

2023 WILL BE AN AVERAGE YEAR FOR NUMBER 7.

Lucky Day: Monday

Lucky Dates: Except 3,12,21,30,6,15,24,7,16,25,8, 17,26,9,18,27 all other dates in any month will be lucky.

Lucky Months: January, February, April, May, October, and November.

Lucky Colour: Smokey Brown

Number 8

People born on dates 8, 17, or 26 of any month belong to Number 8. Saturn is the ruling planet of Number 8.

- Number 8 denotes confidence and determination.
- At the workplace or in business, there will be more hard work and challenges this year.
- Make your health your priority this year. Take good care of yourself.

2023 WILL BE AN AVERAGE YEAR FOR NUMBER 8.

Lucky Day: Saturday

Lucky Dates: Except 1,10,19,28,4,13,22,7,16, 25,8, 17,26,9,18,27 all other dates in any month will be lucky.

Lucky Months: February, March, May, June, November & December.

Lucky Colour: Black/Dark Blue

Number 9

People born on dates 9, 18, or 27 of any month belong to Number 9. Mars is the ruling planet of Number 9.

- Number 9 individuals have strong determination and will-power.
- Students can lose focus on studying during certain intervals. But your lucky days and dates can bring good results, make optimum use of this time.

2023 WILL BE AN AVERAGE YEAR FOR NUMBER 9.

Lucky Day: Tuesday

Lucky Dates: Except 7,16,25,8,17,26 all other dates in any month will be lucky.

Lucky Months: January, February, March, April, May, June, September, October, November & December.

Lucky Colour: Red

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By **JERRY PINTO**

Translator, Poet and Novelist

INGLISH LIKE US

From maverick madness to sanity and from magical realism to patient scrutiny, these books own the shelves they stand on

This is a terrible task. It might even have been possible 25 years ago, but at this point in time, you simply don't know what to do. So you fall back on galloping through the books you have kept over 40 years of book collecting to see which ones would still make the list and seeing what still seems to hold. Does this mean this is a personal list? You bet your deckle edge. Reading is an intensely personal habit. Reviewing comes from that same space, the personal masquerading as the hyperrational. This list is an invitation to you: go make your list. But do not do this on memory. It is a fickle thing memory and will not serve to help much. You have changed, the book has remained the same. (Or has it?) Something that rejoiced your heart may now seem a bit banal. And other books may take on a new glow. Every Best of...list should therefore be considered as a catalyst for another. Happy reacting.

Final caveat: I think sometimes I have chosen a book for a voice. The voice is a promise. The book is one of the parts that the voice has sung for us in the opera of the mind. I won't say which ones are books and which ones are voices, but you might be able to guess.

1. G.V. Desani

All About H. Hatterr (1948)

Oh my hat and whiskey, what a start we made. Shandy, I am saying, my buddies and biddies and biddas and other bodies. This was language retrofitted for the great new world of *Inglis ispikking*. It was a magnificent novel, and should have beaten the path straight, but its very audacity meant it ended up in a cul de sac and we had to wait for several years before we could do it again.

2. Salman Rushdie

Midnight's Children (1981)

When we did it again, how we did it! Salman Rushdie's Booker of Bookers, his Saleem Sinai, his intimacy and his expansiveness, his net slung wide across our history but also its fine appreciation of the miniature and the minuscule. Here it was, the magical realism and the metaphors: silence for a day unravelling the universe of the inside. Here it was pop culture references: babies switched at birth so that the *raja* becomes the *runk* and

TOP 10 INDIAN NOVELS IN ENGLISH

1. G.V. Desani
All About H. Hatterr (1948)

2. Salman Rushdie
Midnight's Children (1981)

3. Amitav Ghosh
The Hungry Tide (2004)

4. Kiran Nagarkar
Cuckold (1997)

5. Manju Kapur
Home (2006)

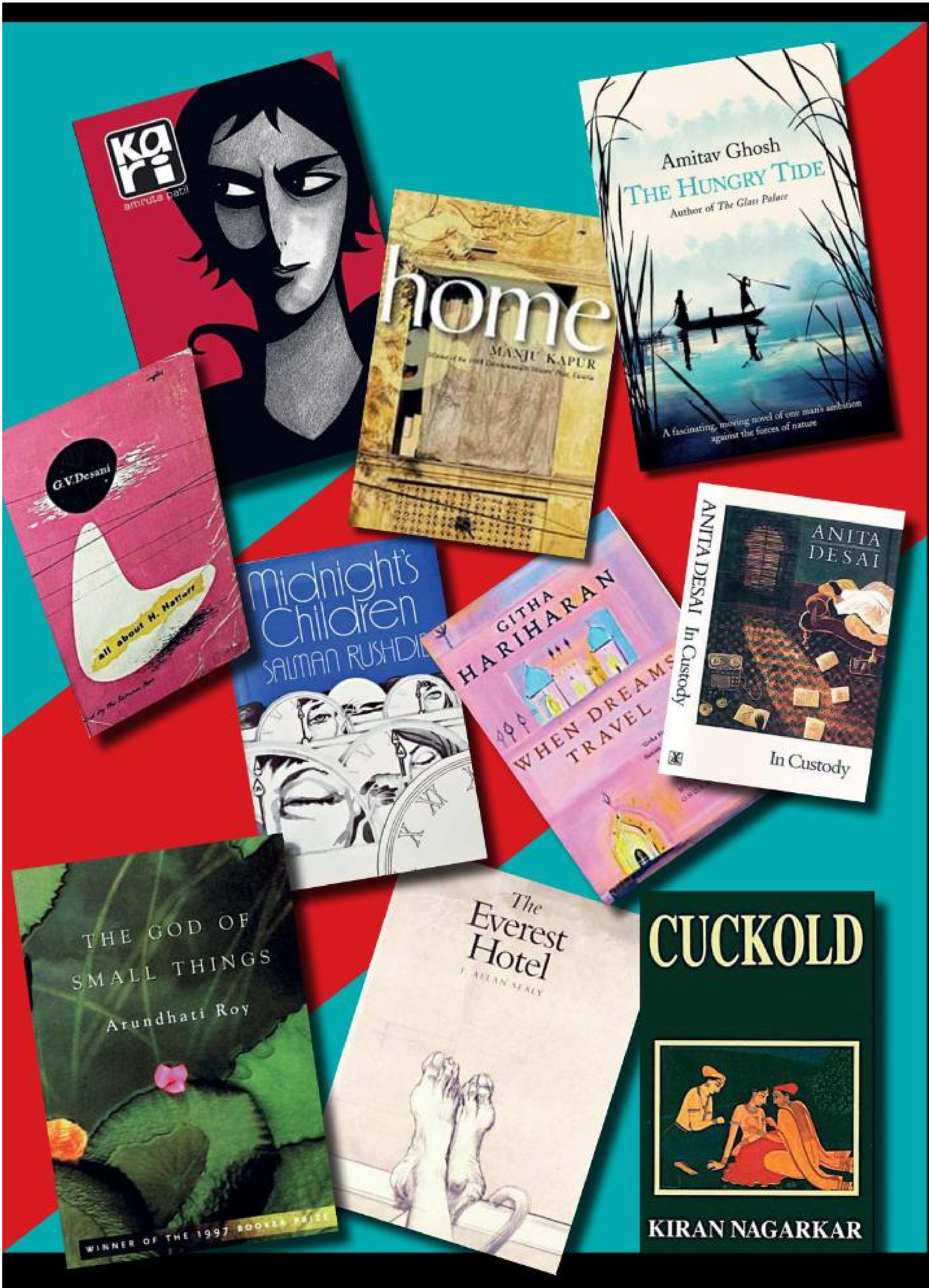
6. Anita Desai
In Custody (1984)

7. Arundhati Roy
The God of Small Things (1997)

8. Githa Hariharan
When Dreams Travel (1999)

9. Amruta Patil
Kari (2008)

10. I. Allan Sealy
The Everest Hotel (1988)


kari
amruta patil
Amitav Ghosh
THE HUNGRY TIDE
Author of The Glass Palace
A fascinating, moving novel of one man's ambition against the forces of nature
home
MANJU KAPUR
G.V.Desani
all about H. Hatterr
Midnight's Children
SALMAN RUSHDIE
GITHA HARIHARAN
WHEN DREAMS TRAVEL
ANITA DESAI
ANITA DESAI In Custody
In Custody
THE GOD OF SMALL THINGS
Arundhati Roy
WINNER OF THE 1997 BOOKER PRIZE
The Everest Hotel
I. ALLAN SEALY
CUCKOLD
KIRAN NAGARKAR

vice versa. It was such a grab bag of a novel, and yet, if you tried to think of it without its smallest part, you saw it was a finely-wrought jigsaw.

3.Amitav Ghosh

The Hungry Tide (2004)

Yes, I know you have other older books in mind. But this one is so liquid with stories that you cannot help going down again for more, coming up again with some other strange, wriggling story. Set in the Sundarbans, that forest of water, that barometer of the weather, that source of gods and demons and disaster, it begins with a quest. Piyali looks for dolphins in the manner of a scientist and must contend with the very different Kanai and the boatman Fakir. In a way, this novel also foretells Ghosh's commitment to climate change and the disasters of the Anthropocene.

4. Kiran Nagarkar

Cuckold (1997)

Again, everyone's favourite may be *Raavan & Eddie*, but this one has my heart. Nagarkar has told the story of his conversion often, the dark ride in a freezing Delhi auto when the cuckold demands that his story be told. The Rana who has been cuckolded by the Blue Divinity is one of the most convincing historical characters I have ever read. There is a wonderful set piece about trying to win battles by running away to fight another day. (Ranchhoddas would approve.) And when all else fails, may a man not woo his wife by painting himself blue?

5. Manju Kapur

Home (2006)

We are a nation of families. Family defines who we are for others; it seeks to define who we are too. Manju Kapur is one of the great archivists of the upper-class upper-caste North Indian family. In *Home*, she sets out her pieces with the care of a chessplayer and then she watches as they head towards the inevitable explosion occasioned by the meeting of an irresistible force (headstrong young women) and immoveable objects (patriarchal old men).

6. Anita Desai

In Custody (1984)

I think we were reminded of how much we loved Urdu, we were also reminded of how much savagery had been shown to it and how much more we loved it as it raised its tattered self and put on a proud show at the *mehfil* of languages. To write in English, a language that works best with understatement, about Urdu, a language that throws out its arms to embrace emotion, is to court disaster. It takes a daring novelist to do that and Anita Desai, blessed with German and English and Gujarati and Hindi, pulled it off with elan.

7. Arundhati Roy

The God of Small Things (1997)

Ayemenem is on every Indian's literary map. It is markedly different from earlier idyllic south Indian spaces because it is richly green, yes, it is beautiful yes, and it is also veined by casteism and there is danger lurking for two Syrian Christian children with huge eyes from a vendor of sweet drinks. This is not about what happens but about the texture of the writing. That is moss, dank, moist, rich and unforgettable.

8. Githa Hariharan

When Dreams Travel (1999)

No one remembers their first encounter with the thousand-and-one nights, which ought, by now, to be a common noun. I remember buying a 17-volume edition when I was 14 and only finding the time to read it when the pandemic made long luscious hours of reading possible. This is a beautifully textured retelling of that world.

9. Amruta Patil

Kari (2008)

It is difficult to say how important *Kari* was for generations of women readers. Amruta Patil's graphic novel was powerful, but there was something eerie about it too, as if under the surface of the largely black-and-white graphics, there ran a river of blood. It was also a sexy book and it introduced us to another kind of woman, a complete break from the stereotypes of femininity.

10. I. Allan Sealy

The Everest Hotel (1988)

I had not seen the High Himalaya when I was reading *The Everest Hotel*, but I could see almost all of the novel in my mind's eye. Almost all the characters seemed to have a story. The idea of a hotel—enshrined in our collective consciousness as a locus of license—turned into a haven of last resort run by nuns—terrifying, powerful figures as the renunciate is ever more potent a figure than a potentate—was strangely beautiful and each character that crossed your line of sight was different.

A fascin
agai
ANITA DESAI
dnight's
children
ITHA
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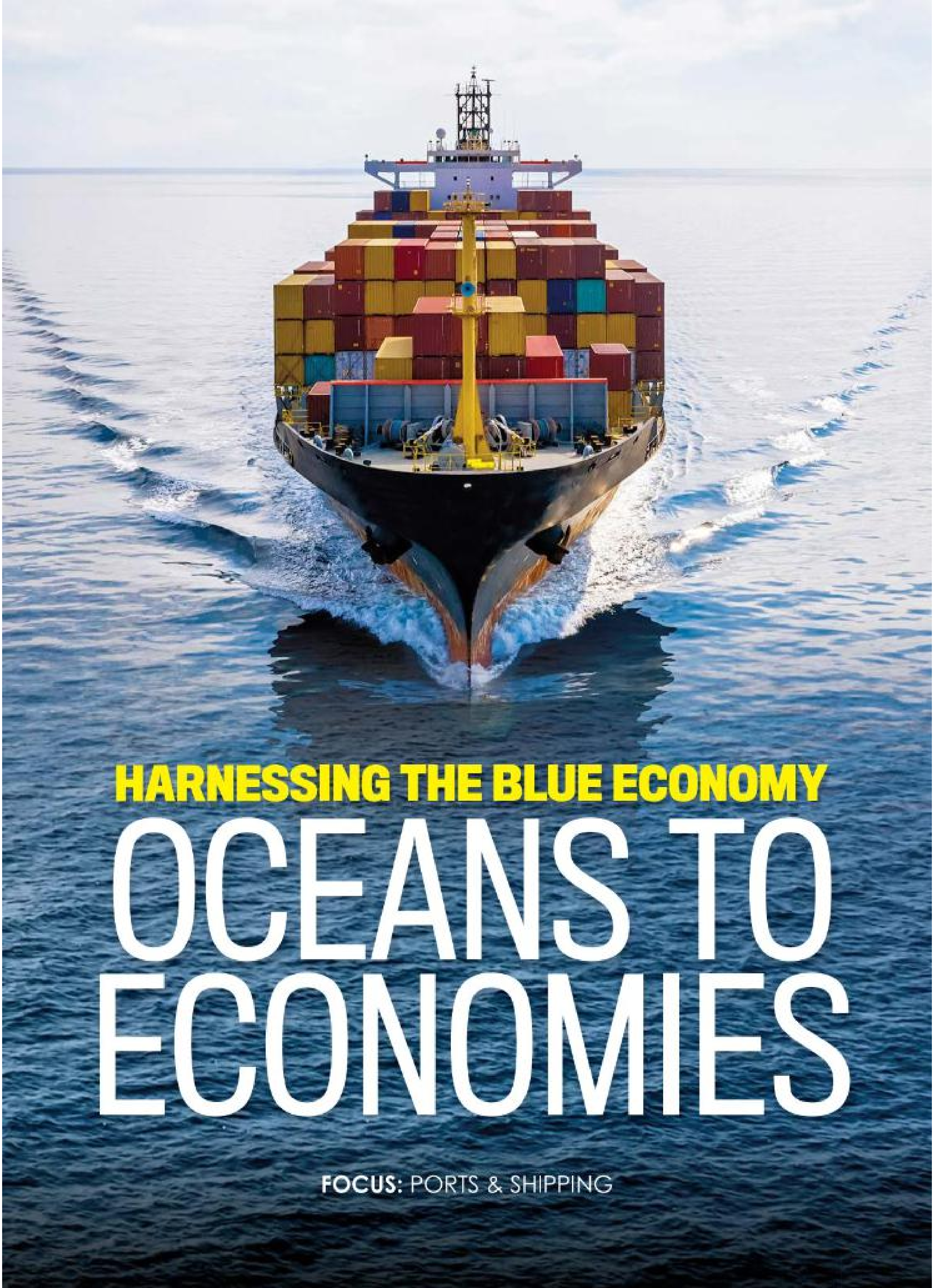

HARNESSING THE BLUE ECONOMY

OCEANS TO ECONOMIES

FOCUS: PORTS & SHIPPING

SAGARMALA
TRANSFORMING INDIA'S COASTLINE

Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways (MoPSW) has traversed a long way since 2014 to enhance the performance and efficiency of the Indian maritime sector, thus accelerating the country's economic development to pave the way for a prosperous and Aatmanirbhar Bharat. Significantly, the coastal traffic has increased by 77% and cargo through waterways has increased by 1477% in the last eight years.

The maritime sector in India has grown manifold over the years with 12 major and 200+ non-major ports situated along its 7,500 km long coastline and a vast network of navigable waterways. The sector plays a crucial role in the country's overall trade and growth as **more than 90% of its trade by volume** and about **70% of the trade by value** is undertaken through maritime transport. To shape maritime prowess into a robust engine of the nation's development, government has given top priority to improving efficiency of major ports, by undertaking policy initiatives and reforms supporting trade and ease of doing business, creation of modern and sustainable infrastructure of global standards, promoting logistics by establishing multimodal terminals along inland waterways, expansion in ship-building & recycling activities and various other measures aimed at harnessing the immense potential of the country's coastline to the fullest. Government has constantly been taking concrete measures aimed at adding pace to capacity building and enhancing efficiency of the maritime sector.

SAGARMALA PROGRAMME - NEW DIMENSIONS IN PORT LED ECONOMY

Sagarmala is a national programme of MoPSW aimed at accelerating economic development towards the goal of Aatmanirbhar Bharat by leveraging the potential of

India's 7,517 km long coastline, 14,500 km of potentially navigable waterways and its strategic location on key international maritime trade routes. The core vision of the Sagarmala programme is to reduce logistics cost for both domestic and Export Import (EXIM) cargo with requisite infrastructure investment.

Sagarmala was launched by the government of India in 2015. Growing from tide to tide, Sagarmala has traversed a long way to reach a tally of **802 projects worth Rs 5.4 Lakh Cr.** which are currently under monitoring. Out of these, **220 projects to the tune of Rs 1.12 Lakh Cr.** have been completed; 231 projects worth Rs. 2.21 Lakh Cr. are being implemented and the remaining projects are under various stages of development.

In a spirit of cooperative federalism epitomised in "Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas", these projects are being implemented by relevant central ministries, state governments, major ports and other agencies through the private sector, and Public Private Partnership (PPP) wherever feasible.

Hon'ble PM has laid down the vision of Aatmanirbhar Bharat wherein the maritime sector can greatly contribute in terms of activities like ship building, repair, and recycling. As he succinctly puts it, "The country's coastal economy is being strengthened through the Sagarmala programme, wherein along with modernisation of old ports, new ones are being built. We believe that our ports are gateways to development. Therefore, the government has launched the Sagarmala programme to modernise the connectivity and infrastructure on the coast. We are working with a big vision to make the entire coastal region an important centre of development for New India".

Under the path-breaking leadership of Hon'ble PM, government has adopted a comprehensive approach to achieve fast-paced economic growth in a sustainable manner. This has been done through focussed efforts on following key themes:

PORT LED DEVELOPMENT

Ports serve as a vital link between sea and land transit. With an aim to support critical economic activities in the hinterland and to address the growing trade volume needs while reducing logistics cost by improved efficiencies, the government via Sagarmala programme has undertaken numerous projects for modernisation, mechanisation and capacity enhancement of ports. In the last eight years, 89 port modernisation projects worth more than **Rs. 31,000 crore** have been completed resulting in capacity addition of **more than 230 million tonnes per annum**, apart from improving the average container vessel turnaround time from 41.7 hours in 2014 to about **27 hours** in 2022.

Furthermore, the government has undertaken more than 13 projects for new port development across Coastal States/ UTs including Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra, Gujarat, Karnataka, Andaman & Nicobar Islands and Tamil Nadu with estimated investment of **Rs 1.25 Lakh Cr.** under Sagarmala. One of the marquee projects among these is Vadhavan deep draft port in Maharashtra which is expected to add container handling capacity of more than **23 million TEUs** by 2040, thereby placing India on the global map of top 10 container ports.

Additionally, to reduce logistics costs by locating industries at the ports- government under the Port-led industrialisation pillar of Sagarmala has completed 9 projects worth more than Rs 45 Lakh Cr. and facilitated the allotment of more than **8,000 acres** of land for industrialisation. It has a potential to generate more than **2 Lakh direct and indirect employment**. A 277 hectares multi-sector Special Economic Zone (SEZ) project, located next to Jawaharlal Nehru Port Authority (JNPA) was inaugurated by the Prime Minister in 2014. It is meticulously designed with state-of-the-art infrastructure to boost export-oriented industries in India. Being close to JNPA, the project promises ready availability of raw material, access to global markets, and strong multi-modal connectivity. The SEZ will generate more than **50,000 direct and indirect employment** when fully operational.

To drive efficiencies at the ports and ease-up capital for greenfield projects, the government has taken multiple measures by offering berths at major ports on PPP mode. Jawaharlal Nehru Port Authority (JNPA) has become the 1st major port in India to be operated fully on landlord model. Further, as part of its efforts to promote landlord model in the port sector, government has identified 68 projects of more than **Rs. 36 Lakh Cr.** to be awarded in the next 2 years under asset monetization which is expected to operationalise about **370 million tonnes** per annum capacity. Going forward, government has planned various interventions in the ports sector viz. improving governance mechanisms, amendments in existing legislatures, promoting PPP, fiscal support, and financial resilience to enable overall sustainable growth of the sector.

COASTAL COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

The government, under Sagarmala, has taken multiple initiatives in convergence

KEY SUCCESS AREAS

S. No.	Parameter	2014/15	2021/22	% Improvement
1	National Waterways (Nos.)	5	111	**2120%**
2	Annual Cruise Passengers (Lakhs)	1.07	4.68	**337%**
3	Cruise Ship Calls (Nos.)	139	451	**224%**
4	PPP Berths (Nos.)	28	70	**150%**
5	Seafarers (Lakhs)	2.1	4.8	**129%**
6	Major Ports Cargo Handling Capacity (MTPA)	800	1597	**100%**
7	Coastal Cargo Movement (million Tonnes)	74.9	133	**78%**
8	Ease of Doing Business Ranking (#)	134	63	**53%**
9	Containerized Cargo Handled by Major Ports (million TEUs)	7.4	11.2	**51%**
10	Trade Across Borders Rank (#)	132	68	**48%**
11	Average Container Vessel Turnaround Time (hrs)	41.7	27.2	**35%**
12	Average Ship Berthday Output ('000 tonnes)	12.5	16.2	**30%**

LNG Carrier Ship

Container Vessel being Unloaded

with Department of Fisheries, Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry & Dairying for socio-economic well-being & welfare of the coastal community, particularly upgradation of Fishing Harbours and Fish Landing Centres. In this regard, **9 fishing harbour projects worth about Rs. 620 Cr.** have already been completed at Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Karnataka & Maharashtra, benefitting around **30,000 fishermen** directly and indirectly. Further, the government has also sanctioned funds for modernisation and **upgradation of 5 fishing harbours** at Kochi, Chennai, Visakhapatnam, Paradip, and Mallet Bunder (Mumbai).

Under the Hon'ble PM's concept of Arth Ganga aimed at unlocking waterways potential of livelihood support for socio- economic development of nearby community, government has given access to cross-river transport for population living close to the river through construction of **62 floating community jetties** across the country. Government has also issued guidelines for setting up floating jetties/platforms in coastal areas, estuaries, waterways, and reservoirs and is implementing 50 floating jetty projects in Andhra Pradesh, Puducherry, Karnataka, Kerala and Tamil Nadu in the initial Phase.

As part of its efforts towards supporting various economic and social projects at the coasts, government has set up Sagarmala Development Company Limited (SDCL) to assist project SPVs through institutional mechanism by equity participation. Further, building upon the success of the Sagarmala Programme, government has formulated "Holistic Development of Coastal Districts wherein more than **560 projects** with an estimated cost of **~Rs. 59,000 crore** have been identified under the four pillars of Coastal Infrastructure Development, Coastal Industrial Development, Coastal Tourism Development and Coastal Community Development.

In the area of skill development of the coastal community, the government has already completed **20 projects worth Rs 1,482 Cr**. This includes 5 skill development projects which have been completed in five states resulting in training of **more than 1,900 candidates** under the DDU GKY Sagarmala Convergence Program. Further, **more than 39,000 candidates** have been trained in the Safety Training Institution at Alang Ship Breaking Yard.

Further, government has established **Centre of Excellence in Maritime and Shipbuilding (CEMS)** at Mumbai & Vishakhapatnam, first of its kind in Asia with 24 laboratories which provides more than 50 courses for engineering, polytechnic, and graduate students. Moreover, to provide innovative and applied research-based

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> "Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways, Government of India, has been working tirelessly for the transformation of its maritime sector through several programs since 2014 to step up investments, particularly the Sagarmala programme. The vision of Hon'ble PM Narendra Modi is to enable the coastal area development, improve coastal infrastructure and promote marine economy in a sustainable manner to strengthen the Blue Economy and realising the rationale behind 'transformation through transportation.' We have achieved significant progress since 2014 with improvements in many areas viz. improving efficiency of Major Ports, policy initiatives and reforms supporting trade and Ease of Doing Business, provision of multi-modal services for logistic movement in the country through inland waterways, expansion in ship-building & recycling activities and various measures to attract flagging of vessels in India. We are confident that the ongoing and planned measures by the government will surely guide the way ahead towards a robust maritime sector and add strength to the nation's efforts towards building a prosperous and Aatmanirbhar Bharat."
>
> — *Sarbananda Sonowal, Union Minister of Ports, Shipping & Waterways (PSW) and Ayush,*

Mumbai Mandwa RoPax Ferry

SHIPPING CORPORATION OF INDIA

SCI owns 59 vessels having total 5.31 million Dead Weight Tonnage (DWT), constituting about 27% of Indian tonnage. Average age of SCI's fleet is 12.6 years compared to Indian tonnage average of 18 years. It operates and manages 67 diversified vessels for Andaman and Lakshadweep Administrations, GSI, ONGC including sensitive and projects of national importance along with 4 LNG vessels in JVs.

SCI's two PSVs - 'SCI Nalanda' and 'SCI Yamuna' were deployed during Nov' 2013 for "Mars Orbiter Mission" of ISRO. SCI vessels are used to import of radioactive and defence cargo on behalf of Government Agencies, such as Indian Navy, DRDO, Department of Atomic Energy. It is the only Indian company having stakes in LNG vessels and providing O&M services for LNG carriers.

PARADIP PORT TRUST

Paradip Port, the second highest cargo handling Port in the country plans to augment it's cargo handling capacity to 300 million MT, with the commissioning of Western dock project by 2025-26. This project will enable the Port to handle fully laden Cape size vessel of 18.5 mts draft.

The Port is also the hub for coastal shipping, especially thermal coal to power plants located in southern and western India.

With its smart Port initiative, greenification measure and capacity augmentation plans, Paradip Port aims to emerge as mega major Port in the country, providing an ecosystem of logistic comfort for Exim trade.

engineering solutions to various issues related to ports, waterways, and coasts in the country, government has set up the **National Technology Centre for Ports, Waterways and Coasts (NTCPWC)** at IIT Madras apart from establishing the Centre for Inland and Coastal Maritime Technology (CICMT) at IIT Kharagpur which serves as the government's technology arm to provide research, testing and experimentation facility to IWAI, CSL and major ports.

A living testimony to Hon'ble PM's vision of self reliant India, these indigenous state of the art institutes are already **competing with World class players in providing cost effective consultancy** and technical services to ports across the country building next generation technology like night navigation at ports, etc.

COASTAL SHIPPING AND INLAND WATERWAYS

Cargo movement through coastal shipping and inland waterways is sustainable and environment friendly. Hence, an impetus has been given by the government under the Sagarmala Programme to undertake projects which will result in shift of cargo from land-based transportation to coastal and inland waterways mode.

The sector posed many key challenges such as non-availability of return cargo, lack of dedicated coastal shipping infrastructure, dependency of first and last mile connectivity on other modes, insufficient parcel size for transporting through vessel, etc. In this respect, government has launched several projects to address these challenges, resulting in a significant increase in the coastal cargo volume handled from **74.9 to 133 million tonnes**. Further to boost the coastal infrastructure under Sagarmala Programme, government has completed constructed **5 coastal berths worth Rs 122 crore,** adding a net capacity of 6.35 million tonnes per annum.

A major boost to **Inland Waterways Transport** sector has been provided by the Government through enactment of National Waterways Act, 2016 taking the total number of National Waterways (NW) from **5 in 2014 to 111 in 2022** which now cover a total length of **more than 20,000 kms** spreading across 24 States in the country. Owing to various Infrastructural, regulatory and technology-led initiatives by government to promote Inland Waterways, the sector witnessed meteoric rise in cargo volume handled from **~55 million tonnes** in 2016-17 to about **109 million tonnes** in 2021-22.

Hon'ble Union Minister launching Battery Electric Autonomous Vessel delivered to Norway by CSL

> "Under Sagarmala Programme, we have a huge pipeline of infrastructure projects for holistic development of entire coastline. Also, focussed efforts are being made for enhancing the role of Coastal Shipping & Inland Waterways in the country. Further, we have identified more than 200 port connectivity projects for providing seamless port connectivity to the hinterland. We are preparing a blueprint to expand our port capacities by 4X to 10,000 million tonnes to cater to the rising cargo growth."
>
> – Bhushan Kumar, Joint Secretary, Sagarmala & PPP, Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways

Port Rail Connectivity

Government has been actively working towards increasing India's share of Intra-BIMSTEC cargo trade via Inland Waterways by promoting cargo movement to Bangladesh, Bhutan and Nepal. Through many government led initiatives, cargo Services via Inland Waterways from Haldia to Patna and Dhubri (Assam) to Bangladesh have now started. In terms of demand activation, several oil and petro-chemical companies have already pledged long-term cargo movement for the first time from Assam to Bangladesh and Haldia via Inland Waterways. Moreover, the upgradation of Badarpur and Karimganj terminals on river Barak (NW-16) in Lower Assam has boosted the cargo movement between India and Bangladesh.

A pilot movement of 200 ton food grains belonging to Food Corporation of India (FCI) was successfully undertaken from Patna (Bihar) to Pandu (Guwahati), Assam via Indo-Bangladesh Protocol route covering a distance of 2,350 km.

As part of regularised movement of stone aggregates from Bhutan through Dhubri (Assam) IWT terminal, 319 vessels loaded with stone aggregates / coal of total weight 51,210 MT sailed from Dhubri (India) to Chilmari (Bangladesh) during FY 2021-22. Infra and business improvement resulted in 5.43 million tonnes of cargo movement during FY21-22 on Indo Bangladesh Protocol route which was all time high.

Further, Inland Waterways Authority of India (IWAI), under Ministry of Ports, Shipping & Waterways (MoPSW), has identified 25 viable NWs for further development and increasing the cargo handled by inland waterways. Moreover, the government under Sagarmala Programme is implementing **37 Inland Waterways projects** of

Newly Constructed Floating Jetty

Zero Emission Electric Ferry at Varanasi

inland waterways with total estimated investment of around **Rs 4,800 crore** being executed by IWAI and state agencies

Urban water transportation through roll-on-roll-off (RORO)- (ROPAX) and Passenger Jetties: RORO and ROPAX service as a transport service has significant inherent benefits such as reduction in the travel time vis-à-vis land routes, lesser vehicular emission and easing of road traffic congestion. India, with a long coastline and riverine connections, has great potential for executing such projects. To leverage the low cost and environmental benefits of urban water transport vis-à-vis other modes such as road and rail, the government has identified more than **70 RoRo – RoPax & Passenger Jetty projects** across the country under Sagarmala Programme. Out of these, **9 projects have already been completed** with a total financial assistance of ~Rs 207 Cr.

Among these, one of the key impact project is the ROPAX ferry commenced in **Ghogha-Hazira** resulting in reduction in travel time from **10 hours to 4 hours** apart from facilitating quick movement of **15,000+ trucks, 50,000 cars and around 2 lakh passengers**. Similarly, to ease the road congestion in Mumbai, the government has launched ferry service between Mumbai-Mandwa resulting in reduction of distance of **109 km by road to 18.5 km sea-distance**, time reduction from **3 hours to just 45 minutes**. It has resulted in providing much needed relief to passengers resulting in movement of **5.5 lakh+ passengers and 1 lakh+ vehicles**.

GREEN SHIPPING

To reduce emissions from maritime sector in line with International Maritime Organization (IMO)'s Green House Gases (GHG) reduction strategy, government is working towards development of zero and low-emission solutions in the maritime sector. As per India's COP 26 goals, government has set climate targets limiting the global warming well below 2 degrees Celsius and efforts are being made to limit temperature increase to 1.5 degree Celsius above pre-industrial levels. Multiple initiatives have been already taken by the government for reducing maritime sector's carbon footprint. Some of the key measures taken in this regard include -increasing the share of solar & wind power, provision of shore power to port crafts/vessels and using electricity powered port equipment at the Major Ports. Further, the government has also drafted a "Green Port Policy" to suggest framework and guidelines for incorporation of green initiatives in the port sector. It captures the focused areas, measured outcomes, implementation roadmap and cost recovery mechanism for the port operators and port authorities which will help India in achieving the 'Intended Nationally Determined Contributions (INDCs)' target, as well as the International Maritime Organization (IMO) 2030 targets. Moreover, Cochin Shipyard Limited (CSL) which is India's largest shipbuilding and maintenance facility under the government's aegis is spearheading various green vessel technology projects to promote Green Shipping in the country. These include development of **green urban mobility solutions** like **Hybrid Electric Ferries, autonomous Zero-emission vessels**, pilot project on **Hydrogen Fuel Cell Ferry, Electric Catamaran Water Taxi**, Hybrid Electric Ro-Ro, Hybrid LNG-Electric Inland Cargo Carrier, Hybrid Tugs, etc.

Possibilities are also being explored for deployment of **fully electric ferry and hydrogen fuel cell ferries at Inland Waterways** for enhancement of river cruise tourism in the country. For instance, Electric Catamaran Water Taxi deployment is being considered at Varanasi and Guwahati in first phase. Additionally, use of Hybrid Electric Roll on -Roll off (Ro-Ro) vessels having dual fuel system (LNG+ battery) is being considered at Guwahati for river crossings.

> “
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> DPA has emerged as a vibrant, world class multi-cargo port offering mutually beneficial and sustainable services to the Port Users and port based industries, thereby driving the economic growth of the region. The port is further planning to become a Mega Port and increase its capacity to more than 300 MMTPA for which two major projects for an estimated cost of about Rs.6000 crore are already initiated under PPP.
>
> – S.K. Mehta, IFS, Chairman,
> Deendayal Port Authority

Liquid Terminal Facility at JNPA

PORT CONNECTIVITY

Port connectivity is one of the critical aspects for the overall maritime trade. The government through the Sagarmala programme has facilitated faster and efficient cargo movement between ports and their respective hinterland with an aim to minimise the overall logistics cost of the country. Timely implementation of port connectivity projects has enhanced overall freight efficiency and a testimony to government's efforts in this regard is successful completion of **69 port connectivity projects worth Rs. 32,000 Cr.** resulting in addition of **~1,300 km length** of road & rail connectivity to ports while another **67 projects of 5,500 km** length are under implementation.

PM GatiShakti
National Master Plan for Multi-Modal Connectivity

Under the visionary leadership of Hon'ble PM exhorting for seamless infrastructure planning and execution, the government has formed multimodal committees for port connectivity having representation from major ports (MoPSW), state maritime boards (State & UT Governments) , Ministry of Road Transport and Highways (MoRTH) & Ministry of Railways (MoR) for assessing project wise feasibility, funding arrangement, timelines, implementing agencies etc.

Further under PM Gati Shakti National Master Plan for multimodal connectivity, government has carried out an extensive exercise to find the connectivity gaps between ports and hinterland. Based on the consultation with major ports and state maritime boards, **more than 100 rail and road connectivity projects** have already been identified for implementation in coordination with MoR and MoRTH.

SHIPBUILDING, REPAIR AND RECYCLING

To fulfil the vision of Hon'ble PM towards being Aatmanirbhar Bharat, government has taken multiple steps to promote Shipbuilding, Repair and

Cruise Ship

Recycling in India. To encourage domestic shipbuilding and to provide a level playing field vis a vis foreign shipyards, government has launched Shipbuilding Financial Assistance Policy (FAP) for Indian shipyards worth **Rs. 4,000 Crores**.
Additionally, towards demand activation by increasing demand of the ships built in India, government has given priority in chartering of vessels to vessels built in India, flagged in India and owned by Indians under the amendments in the guidelines of ROFR (**Right of First Refusal**). The government envisions to make global leader in Ship repair & Ship recycling and is keenly observing the policy measures pursued by other key shipbuilding, repair and recycling nations in order to adopt the best practices for Indian industry and to keep pace with leading nations. Further, all efforts are being made towards setting up a strong ship building eco-system with adequate infrastructure and policy enablers to become a leader in the ship building, repair and recycling industry.

Going forward, government is working on various reforms and initiatives such as **domestic demand channelisation for ship building, development of common platforms for ancillary and marine design ecosystem, creation of ship repair clusters** and, promoting waste to wealth through increased scrap usage in steel industry to enhance the country's global stature in ship building, repair and recycling.

KEY ASPIRATIONS

- To develop mega ports in India with capacities of more than 300 Million Tonnes Per Annum to compete with best-in-class ports in the world
- To develop SMART Ports with fully automated terminal operations
- To develop Carbon Neutral Ports and Hydrogen/ Ammonia hubs at Indian Ports
- To develop PPP berths at Major Ports on landlord model to drive efficiencies
- To increase the share of renewable energy to 60% of the total power demand of each of its major ports
- To become No.1 in Ship Recycling and become one of the top 5 Shipbuilding nations in the world
- To augment Port Capacity from current 2,500 Million Tonnes to at least 4 times to handle rising cargo traffic

CRUISE TOURISM

The government has taken multiple initiatives for promoting Cruise Tourism in the country both International as well as domestic. The Indian cruise industry, though in its nascent stage, is growing at over 35% due to multiple government interventions. To unlock India's vast potential in cruise tourism due to its long coastline and inland waterways, increasing disposal incomes, a propensity for travel and continued investments, government has undertaken several projects to improve infrastructure related to cruise shipping in India. For majority of these projects, infrastructure is being developed with the allied facility at major ports. This has led to development of **Cruise Terminals at Mumbai, Goa, New Mangalore & Cochin** apart from steady increase in annual cruise passengers from about 1 lakh in 2014 to **more than 4.6 lakhs in 2022** increase in cruise ship calls from 139 in 2014 to 451 in 2022.

Going forward, government is placing a strong emphasis in not only augmenting the existing infrastructure but also towards development of new facilities to accommodate the rising cruise demand in next 25 years. In this regard, Ministry of Tourism and Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways (MoPSW) are collaboratively working together to promote cruise tourism for its vast economic positive impact, the potential for job creation and earning potential through foreign exchange, amongst many other benefits. Some of the key interventions include development of cruise sector include terminal infrastructure development, theme-based coastal and island circuits, cruise training academies, island ecosystem development and operationalisation of ferry and river cruise terminals on national waterways.

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> Jawaharlal Nehru Port became India's first 100% landlord port. We have a 'Port Ecosystem' which includes- Port Community, terminal operators, freight stations, SEZ, warehouses, Parking Plaza, synergy with customs, smart technology, etc. where the client avails all the facilities in one place. Our ambitious project Vadhavan port will give the advantage of economy of scale and will reduce the logistics cost, increasing EXIM trade of the Nation.
>
> – Sanjay Sethi, IAS, Chairman, JNPA

DIGITAL INITIATIVES & EASE OF DOING BUSINESS

The digital revolution in the last few years has emerged as one of the main drivers of change in the port and maritime sector. Government has been working towards enabling digitalisation and integration of end-to-end process and stakeholders in the entire supply logistics value chain of maritime sector. Multiple initiatives have been taken in the field of digitalization across the port, shipping and inland waterways sector particularly implementation of **Port Operations Management System (OMS), Port Community System PCS 1x**, Standard ERP System, Auxiliary IT system, E-Samudra, River Information System (RIS), Portal for Assets and Navigation Information (PANI), Least Available Depth Information System (LADIS), etc. These initiatives have resulted in several benefits such as **seamless transactions, efficiency enhancement, cost optimisation, Ease of Doing Business, data analytics, machine learning/ artificial Intelligence.**

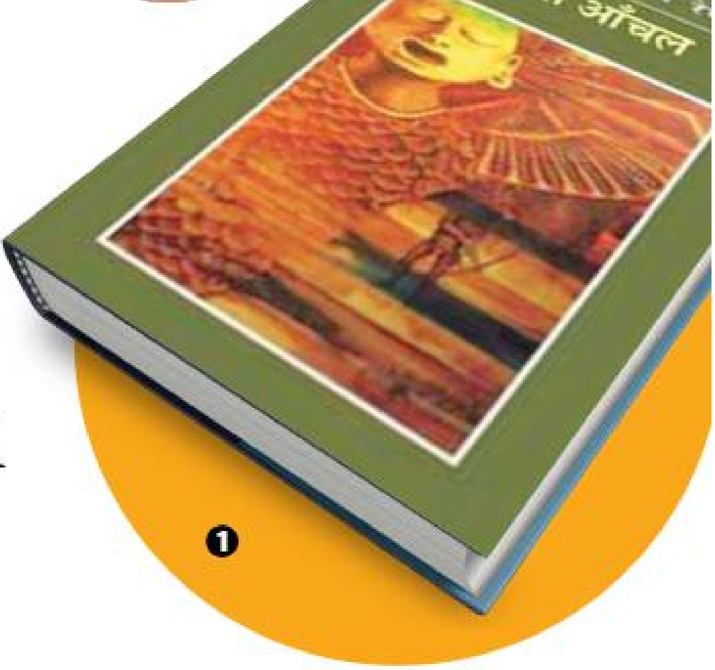
As a result of these, India has vastly improved its position in respect of technological innovation, advancement and integration, improve not only its competitiveness, but also bringing down the cost of international trade. This is evident from the exponential improvement in India's **Ease of Doing Business (EoDB)** ranking from **134 in 2014 to 63 in 2021**, apart from enhancement of India's ranking in **Trade Across Borders** from **132 in 2014 to 68 in 2021**.

In order to further reduce manual documentation and streamline systems in the entire maritime value chain, the government is further working towards developing the **National Logistics Portal-Marine (NLP-Marine)**. Moreover strong emphasis is being put in in the areas of Port process improvement and standardization, Process Integration across all terminal operations, promoting research and development on developing requisite technologies indigenously for supporting autonomous ports, vessels, and other prevalent technologies in the world.

To further improve ease of doing business in the country and to **streamline & speed up the recovery of the pending dues of major ports**, government has launched **One Time Settlement Scheme (OTSS)**, apart from setting up a new dispute settlement institutional mechanism in the form of **Society for Affordable Redressal of Disputes-Ports** (SAROD-Ports).

By **ALOK RAI**

Writer, translator, and ex-faculty, Dept of English, Delhi University



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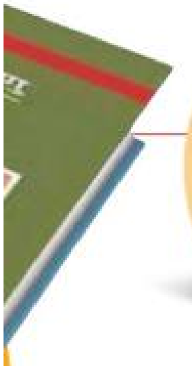
Chroniclers Of The Nation's Pain

The modern Hindi novel embodies the long shadow of Partition, post-Independence disillusionment, political upheaval and the realities of caste

The novel is perpetually, globally, a-dying—even as it continues to thrive. The lugubriousness of this funerary expectation is compounded in the case of the Hindi novel. Hindi has, for reasons deriving from the circumstances of its modern invention, acquired an exaggerated sense of its historical destiny: *rashtrabhasha*, no less, charged with the responsibility of making the 'nation'. Then there is the burden of an implacable, undeniable social reality that demands—more, commands—address. It is a wonder that novelists still find the creative energy to tell stories.

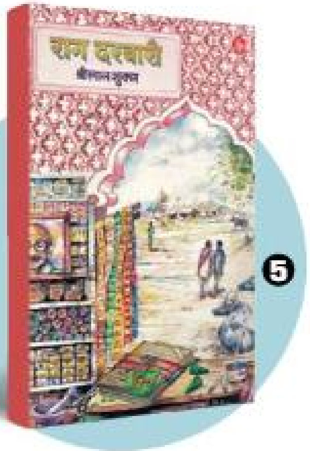
It is also remarkable that there is little echo of the euphoria of Independence—of *azaadi*, to use a word that has oddly become charged with subversive meaning—in the years after that famously mottled dawn—*yeh dagh dagh ujaala*.... To find any suggestion of that moment of hope and idealism, one is forced to turn to the Bombay cinema of the 1950s. Evidently, the 'longer view' of literature did not permit that illusion. Unsurprisingly, the theme of Partition, which came twinned with Independence, is explored by some of the major texts to which we return. Yashpal's *Jhoota Sach* (1960), published in two parts, is an extended novel-length treatment of the trauma of Partition, rendered poignant against the meticulously rendered backdrop of community in 'Bholapandhe Gali' in pre-1947 Lahore. The stories of Manto and Rajinder Singh Bedi are well-known and Agyeya's collection, *Sharanarthi*, deserves to be better known, but Yashpal's novel is a prime exemplar and a far cry from the gory melodrama more typical of this genre. Rahi Masoom Raza's *Aadha Gaon* (1966) is located far from the violent borders, in east UP, and explores, with wit and colour, the fracturing of the rural community of Gangauli in the context of Partition. Bhisham Sahni's *Tamas* (1974) revisited Partition territory after a significant lapse of time. It tells a familiar story, but the fact that it aroused so much resentment showed that the social tendencies that produced the Partition of 1947 were still around, still "unfinished business".

It is difficult to accommodate Krishna Sobti in any one category, but in many of her writings, there are subtle signs, whether of the multiple partitions that have already happened or of those that are still to come. The relatively staid (and largely male, certainly patriarchal) Hindi establish-



राही मासूम रज़ा
आधा गाँव
3

अलग अलग वैतरणी
शिव प्रसाद सिंह
4



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झूठा सच
वतन और देश
2

नौकर की कमीज़
विनोद कुमार शुक्ल
6

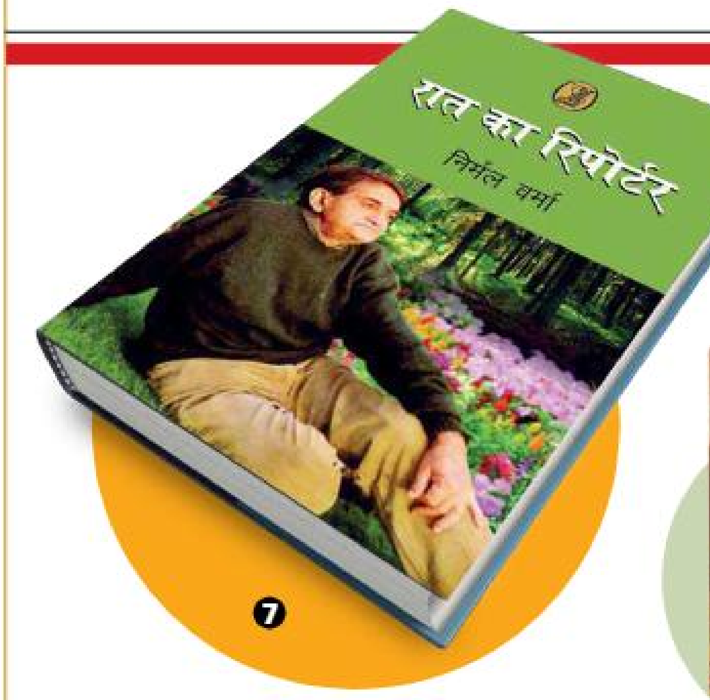
10 OF THE BEST

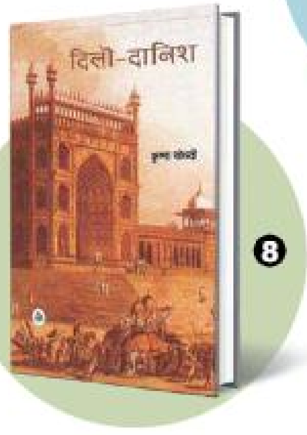
1. **Phanishwar Nath Renu,** *Maila Aanchal (1954)*
2. **Yashpal,** *Jhoota Sach (1960)*
3. **Rahi Masoom Raza,** *Aadha Gaon (1966)*
4. **Shivprasad Singh,** *Alag Alag Vaitarni (1967)*
5. **Shrilal Shukla,** *Raga Darbari (1968)*
6. **Vinod Kumar Shukla,** *Naukar ki Kameez (1979)*
7. **Nirmal Verma,** *Raat ka Reporter (1989)*
8. **Krishna Sobti,** *Dil-o-Danish (1993)*
9. **Geetanjali Shree,** *Mai (2001)*
10. **Shivmurti,** *Tarpan (2010)*

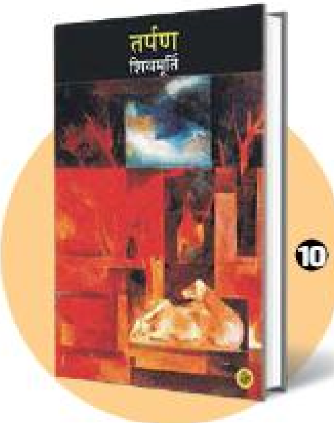
ment was scandalised by the inimitable Sobti's uninhibited Punjabi voice, as happy to span registers as it was to break the taboos of respectability. However, beyond the initial scandal, there is an impressive body of texts. I am thinking, in particular, of *Zindaginama* (1979), *Dil-o-Danish* (1993) and *Daar se Bichhuri* (2000).

The early disenchantment that set in as soon as the immediate violence of Partition had abated, made the pull of realism irresistible—and has produced an impressive and diverse body of texts. They give voice not only to the sadness of the centuries—the accumulated pain of poverty, caste and gender injustice—but, in contrast to Premchand, who died 10 years before Independence, they bring something more: a sense of betrayal of the promises of development and democracy. It is fascinating to see the way in which the deepening of democracy, and the disenchantment with the workings of the nominally 'democratic' state, have happened more or less in tandem.

The great danger here is of sounding like excerpts from newspapers, but this is deflected by various literary devices. The most flamboyant example, perhaps, is that of Phanishwar Nath Renu. Premchand's novels are rendered in a somewhat neutral, unaccented tone, divested of local and regional colour. What makes Renu unique is the unabashed adoption of the folk speech of his part of north Bihar, of Purnea. The resultant effect is hypnotic—as the persistent popularity of *Maila Aanchal* (1954) and the somewhat more extreme *Parti Parikatha* (1957) testify. This regional colour was sought to be dismissed in the early years, as *aanchalikta*, mere regionalism. But, as the subsequent development of the Hindi novel shows, the cultivation of local voices and accents has, in fact, become the preferred route for escaping from the narrative tedium produced by grimly persistent social realities. Shivprasad Singh's painstakingly rendered village of Karaita, in *Alag Alag Vaitarni* (1967), is a worthy example of the realist novel of betrayal. In Shrilal Shukla's *Raga Darbari* (1968), the pervasive irony of the narrative voice has transmuted the sense of betrayal into something like mockery: *vikaas* as farce.







It is in relation to this pervasive disenchantment that I understand the somewhat puzzling visibility of Vinod Kumar Shukla's *Naukar ki Kameez* (1979). The innocent pointlessness that informs his low-key narratives of the mundane trivialities of small-town life—neither the raucous metropolis nor the seething village—captures, in some sense, the mood of the 'less deceived': the generations that were never enchanted enough by the colourful promises of independence, democracy and even that strange, forgotten thing, socialism, to feel disenchanted, let alone angry. Perhaps its mysterious attraction lies in the fact that Shukla's writing appears like an understated disavowal of the gravitational pull of Significance that, for better and for worse, hobbles all who seek to engage with Indian realities.

Of course, there is anger out there—many kinds of anger—lapping at the edges of our possible futures. But while it has found copious expression in poetry—as was seen during the anti-CAA movement—its expression in fiction is relatively limited. Caste is, as so often in India, the obvious place to look. The matter of Premchand's representation of Dalit experience, in several classic short stories—*Kafan* and *Sadgati* and *Thakur ka Kuan*—is too complex to be tackled parenthetically. Still, it is an indication of some fundamental aesthetic struggle that some of the most powerful representations of Dalit experience are to be found in texts that are, alas, all-too-unfictional. I am thinking of Om Prakash Balmiki's *Joothan* (1997), and another that deserves to be much better known—Tulsi Ram's *Murdahiya* (2010). Although I invoke its name in the context of anger, what is remarkable about *Murdahiya* is that its unsparing account of a Dalit childhood is enlivened by moments of happiness and laughter that must find expression even in the direst circumstances. Indeed, it is this that gives the informing anger its unforgettable edge. Another writer whom I have encountered only recently is Shivmurti. A career civil servant, Shivmurti does not wear his caste identity on his sleeve, but it is precisely his inwardness with that range of experience—all-around-us and yet, strangely invisible—that gives his novels and short stories their air of authenticity, their disenchanted contemporaneity. Read the stories in *Kesar Kasturi* (2007) or the novel *Tarpan* (2010).

THE UNSPARING ACCOUNT OF DALIT CHILDHOOD IN *MURDAHIYA* IS ENLIVENED BY LAUGHTER TOO

One can hardly write an account of the Hindi novel today without mentioning Geetanjali Shree. Her *Ret Samadhi* (2018), reincarnated as *Tomb of Sand*, is hogging all the attention, but her first work, *Mai* (2001), is a much-acclaimed account of everyday patriarchy closely observed in a domestic context. It is significant also as the quiet but impassioned starting point of a remarkable trajectory. Shree has been consistently experimental, and her *Hamara Shehar Uss Baras* (1998), written in the aftermath of the Demolition, is a stylish take on the local stirrings of the toxicity in which we are drowning.

The missing Hamlet in this short essay on post-1947 Hindi novels is, of course, Nirmal Verma. And since my account is organised around the need and desire to escape from Premchand, perhaps it would be fair to note that the surest way of doing so is, perhaps, to escape from India altogether. Thus, Verma's first novel, *Ve Din* (1964), is set in Prague. However, in his 'Emergency' novel, *Raat ka Reporter* (1989), Verma came close to engaging with what E.M. Forster described as the world of "telegrams and anger", as against the "personal relations that are the important thing for ever and ever". ■

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G20
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वसुधैव कुटुम्बकम्
VASUDHAIVA KUTUMBAKAM
ONE EARTH ONE FAMILY ONE FUTURE

॥वसुधैव कुटुम्बकम्॥
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RAJASTHAN HAS BECOME

इन्दिरा रसोई योजना
मात्र 8 रुपये में स्वादिष्ट एवं पौष्टिक भोजन

Rajasthan, despite a lot of challenges including inflation, unemployment and others has emerged as a 'Model State' in the entire country. The state government under the leadership of Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot ensured the multidimensional development of the state. The state government succeeded in living up to the people's expectations, fulfilling the promises made in the manifesto, and giving transparent and accountable governance.Today the schemes of Rajasthan are being discussed throughout the country. Many officials from different state governments are coming to Rajasthan to study the schemes so that the same can be implemented for the betterment of the people in their state.

> **The public welfare schemes launched by the state government clearly show the vision of Chief Minister Gehlot and the state is achieving new heights in every sector because of its policies.**

Social Security Pension

The Rajasthan government is providing social security pension to 1 crore people in the state. These social security pensions include Laghu aur Seemant Krishak Vridhjan pension yojana (small and marginal farmer elder people pension scheme), Mukhyamantri Vishesh Yogyajan Samman pension yojana (chief minister specially-abled pension scheme), Mukhyamantri Ekal Nari Samman pension yojana (chief minister single woman pension scheme) and Rajasthan Vridhawastha pension yojana (Rajasthan old age pension scheme).

Chief Minister Chiranjeevi Health Insurance Scheme

Chief Minister Chiranjeevi Health Insurance Scheme (Mukhyamantri Chiranjeevi Swasthya Bima Yojana) is one of the schemes that is being discussed across the country. Now the people of Rajasthan are not worried about the costly treatments, as the general public through this scheme is getting free treatment up to Rs 10 lakh. The limit of Rs 10 lakh has been put to an end in costly treatments such as kidney, heart and liver transplants. Besides this, accident insurance up to Rs 5 lakh is also given. OPD and IPD in government hospitals are free in the state along with medicines and tests are also provided free of cost. Even costly tests such as MRI, CT Scan etc are also free. According to the National Family Health Survey (NFHS-5), around 90% of families in Rajasthan have health insurance, while the national average is only 41%. So far, more than 27.60 lakh patients have been provided free treatment of more than Rs 3195 crore.

> - **Free Insurance upto Rs 10 Lakh.**
> - **More than 27.60 lakh patients have been provided free treatment of more than Rs 3195 crore.**

Mahatma Gandhi English Medium Schools

The objective of the state government was that all children should get a quality education so that they do not lag behind in this competitive world. Chief Minister Gehlot with this intention started Mahatma Gandhi English Medium Schools to ensure that even poor children can study in English medium schools. The response to these schools was so overwhelming that there was a waiting of around 15 students on each seat. A total of 1670 Mahatma Gandhi English medium schools have been opened in the state till November 2022. Students coming from economically weaker sections and rural areas studying in these schools will be able to perform better in the competitive examinations.

> **Launched in 2019, So far 1670 Mahatma Gandhi English Medium Schools have been started and 3,03,146 students have enrolled. Announced in the 2022-23 State Budget to start 1000 schools each in urban and rural areas**

Employment

Unemployment is a major problem in the entire country and in such a situation, the state government is committed to providing a fair opportunity for youth to fulfill their dreams. The Gehlot government till now has provided around 1.35 lakh government jobs, while the recruitment process for 1.25 lakh posts is on and has announced to give another 1 lakh jobs. The government along with the

A MODEL STATE

राज्य सरकार की समस्त कल्याणकारी योजनाएं, ई-बुलेटिन, वीडियो बुलेटिन एवं अन्य उपयोगी जानकारी DIPR के इस ऑफिशियल पेज पर उपलब्ध है।

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> **The Gehlot government till now has provided around 1.35 lakh government jobs, while the recruitment process for 1.25 lakh posts is on and has announced to give another 1 lakh jobs.**

government jobs is also working to create maximum employment opportunities in the private sector. Many investors are investing in Rajasthan due to which employment opportunities have increased. There are 9.23 lakh MSME units functioning in the state and more than 55 lakh people have got employment. The state government apart from this is organising Job Fairs in each district. So far, three mega job fairs were organised in Jaipur, Jodhpur and Bikaner, where lakhs of youth had applied and thousands of them got jobs. The state government has decided to organise a job fair in each district so that the maximum number of youth get jobs.

Old Pension Scheme (OPS)

The state government in 2022-23 budget had announced to implement the Old Pension Scheme (OPS). This has been implemented in the state keeping in mind that officers and employees who give the prime years of their life to the government should not have any worries during their old age and get social security.

Indira Gandhi Urban Employment Guarantee Scheme

- **Guaranteed employment in urban areas for 100 days a year**
- **More than 3.50 lakh job cards issued**

The Chief Minister of Rajasthan also launched the Indira Gandhi Urban Employment Guarantee Scheme on the lines of the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme. People are being given guaranteed employment in urban areas for 100 days a year. More than 3.50 lakh job cards have been issued in this scheme and the government has allotted a budget of Rs 800 crore. Besides this, the state government is giving an additional 25 days of employment in MGNREGS in Rajasthan. Gehlot has also said that the next state budget will be focussed on youth and students.

Indira Rasoi Yojana

- **Food for Rs 8 per plate**
- **More than 8.21 crore people have been provided food**
- **Kitchens being increased to 1000 in 2022-23 financial year**

During the lockdown in the corona pandemic, Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot ensured that 'No One Sleeps Hungry'. Keeping this in mind, he launched Indira Rasoi Yojana, in which people are served nutritious and hot food for Rs 8 per plate with respect and by making them sit. Till now, more than 8.21 crore people have been served food. As of now 951 Indira Rasois are functioning in the state and it has been targeted to increase its number to 1000, after which 13.81 crore food plates per year will be served.

Udaan Yojana

- **12 sanitary pads free of cost to around 28 lakh women and adolescent girls**
- **Plans to distribute free sanitary napkins to 1.45 crore women and girls in the age group of 10-45 years**
- **Budget of Rs 500 crore**

The government is continuously working for the upliftment of women and girls in the state and empowering them. More than 1 crore women and adolescent girls have been given packets of sanitary napkins for free under Í M Shakti Udaan Yojana'. A budget of Rs 500 crore has been allocated for this. Now in the second phase, work has been started to distribute free sanitary napkins to 1.45 crore women and girls in the age group of 10-45 years. The government has also taken a unique initiative to link women of the state with the digital era and will distribute 1.33 crore smartphones to them with free internet facilities for 3 years. The women would know about various schemes of the state government sitting at home and will also get to know various information about India and abroad.

Rajiv Gandhi Rural Olympic Games

- **30 lakh people including children to elderly people took part out of which 10 lakh were women**
- **Rajiv Gandhi Urban Olympics will also be organized from January 26, 2023**

For the first time in the country and the state, Rajiv Gandhi Grameen Olympic Games (Rajiv Gandhi Rural Olympic Games) were organised in Rajasthan. The idea behind this was to build an ideal environment for sports in the state so that the talents of Rajasthan in the future glorify the state by winning medals in national and international competitions. This has created a new sports culture in the state and 30 lakh people took part out of which 10 lakh were women. Now on the lines of the Rajiv Gandhi Rural Olympic Games, from January 26, 2023, Rajiv Gandhi Urban Olympic Games will be organised.

Gehlot on the completion of four years of his government said, "We have always made efforts that the state government's public welfare schemes reach the last person of the society. We made the policies after understanding the feelings of the people. The objective of our government is to resolve each problem of the people of the state and to increase their standard of living. The support of the general public and their love inspires and motivates us to work in the interest of the people. Our government is working with dedication and commitment to fulfill all your hopes".

RAJASTHAN GOVERNMENT'S PUBLIC

Success Stories

Senior Congress leader Ashok Gehlot took oath as the Chief Minister of Rajasthan for the third time in 2018 and his biggest aim was that the people of the state should get 100% benefit from schemes that the state government implements. During the last four years, the state government launched many public welfare schemes. Many successful schemes are topic of discussion in the houses and the state government's popularity too increased. The public welfare schemes of the state government have brought a lot of changes in the lives of the general public and the weakest sections of society.

Words directly from the hearts of the people benefitted from various schemes.

Mukhyamantri Chiranjeevi Swasthya Bima Yojana

Jagannath Kumawat, a farmer from Raipur in Bhilwara district called the Chiranjeevi Yojana a boon. Actually, his family members were worried about his heart disease. He was taken to Shri Siddhi Vinayak Hospital empanelled in the scheme, where the doctors advised for angioplasty. The hospital administration did a cashless treatment of Kumawat. Recovering after the treatment, he said, "This is because of Ashok Gehlot that I got another life."

Got support from Accidental Insurance Scheme

Mohini Devi of Nagaur district lost her husband in a road accident. She and her husband were labourers. After her husband's death, it was very difficult for her to raise her four children. She said, "Mukhyamantri Chiranjeevi Durghatna Bima Yojana (Chief Minister Chiranjeevi Accidental Insurance Scheme) came as a big support and helped my family. This is an excellent initiative of the state government."

Government took care after losing son

Badu Devi resident of Ganganagar said that her son Sachin slipped into the canal and died of drowning. She had registered her family in Mukhyamantri Chiranjeevi Durghatna Bima Yojana and got Rs 5 lakh. Devi said, "I thank Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot from my bottom of my heart for extending support in the hour of crisis." With the moist eye, she said, "I lost my son but the government took care."

Patients hopeful with State Cancer Institute

Blood cancer patient Anjali from Jaipur said that she is being treated free of cost at the Rajasthan State Cancer Hospital in Jaipur. She said till now she has been treated for around Rs 10-15 lakh. "I had lost all hope to live after coming to know about blood cancer. I extend my gratitude to the chief minister that this scheme has proved to be a lifesaver for me," she added.

Old Pension Scheme: Need not have to compromise on self-respect

Sandeep Kumar, a grade-III teacher says that all employees are happy with Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot implementing OPS. Now all government employees will get the benefit of this scheme. Praising the Chief Minister, he said, "OPS will support me in old age and I can lead my life comfortably. My worries are over and I thank the Chief Minister."

Mahatma Gandhi Government School (English Medium)

Poor Children too can study in English medium schools

The Gehlot government started Mahatma Gandhi Government Schools (English Medium) so that even poor children can go and study in English medium schools. Jauya Kumari, a student of class IV said, "I was studying in Hindi medium school and used to think if I could study in English medium school. Today I feel good that I am studying in an English medium school

Parents of children happy

Children of Kamal are studying in English medium schools. He proudly says that his children too study in English medium schools. He said that his children get school uniforms, milk and midday meal free of cost from the government. From medicines to school books and copies, everything is free. "I don't have to spend any money and we are happy with this scheme of the government. We thank the Chief Minister," Kamal said.

Indira Rasoi Scheme

Rajveer, a labourer having food at Indira Rasoi said that it is a very good scheme and one gets fresh and clean food for Rs 8 only and that too like homemade. He gets Rs 300 per day as wages, which he sends to his family. He is surviving because of Indira Rasoi, having two-time meals.

WELFARE SCHEMES

राज्य सरकार की समस्त कल्याणकारी योजनाएं, ई-बुलेटिन, वीडियो बुलेटिन एवं अन्य उपयोगी सामग्री DIPR के इस ऑफिशियल ऐप पर उपलब्ध है।

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Tourists also like Indira Rasoi

Parth Sarthy, a tourist from Chennai after having food at Indira Rasoi for Rs 8 only said, "When I came to Jal Mahal saw a big banner displaying food for Rs 8. I did not believe it. After having food here, I found it good and served with cleanliness. it is praiseworthy. All states should launch such schemes."

IM Shakti Udaan Scheme

Free sanitary napkins to adolescent girls and women

The state government under IM Shakti Udaan Scheme is distributing free sanitary napkins to resolve the health-related problems of adolescent girls and women. Neeraj Gurjar of Sikandara, Dausa said, "This scheme has proved very beneficial for women like me. Providing free sanitary napkins regularly to 10-year-old girls to 45-year-old women became possible because of Chief Minister Gehlot's far-reaching thinking. Now women during menstruation can take care of their health and hygiene." Expressing gratitude to the chief minister she said that now the health security of women has been ensured.

IM Shakti – Kaushal Samarthya Yojana

Dreams of women taking shape

Haseena Bano of Ajmer district said that she took free training of stitching from Parshva Shiksha evum Lok Kalyan Samiti, Rupangarh under the Indira Mahila Shakti – Kaushal Samarthya Yojana and is helping her father in running the house by playing the duty of a son. She said, "I am earning Rs 10,000 per month with this scheme of the state government sitting at home and leading a life of self-respect." Expressing her gratitude to the state government, she said, "This scheme is giving shape to the dreams of the women."

Indira Gandhi Shehari Rojgar Guarantee Yojana

Every hand is getting employment for 100 days near the house and in his/her area in this scheme. Usha Devi, who is working in this scheme said that she got the work near her house due to which she can feed her children on time and also completes the work on time. Similarly, Pushpa Devi said that she got work for 100 days and thanked the government for arranging employment for people like her.

Vridhjan Samman Pension Yojana

Chanda Devi, (74) of Alwar district said that she had to ask for money from her sons for petty expenses, but today she is self-dependent. She always had the wish to donate to religious works, but due to her financial condition, her wish remained unfulfilled. Since she started getting a pension from the state government, she started spending on religious work.

Another elderly person Bhagwan Sahai said that he suffered a fracture after he slipped from the stairs and needed a walker. He ordered a walker with his pension amount. If he had not been getting a pension then he would not have bought the walker and would be longing for it.

Indira Gandhi Shehari Credit Card Yojana

Sangeeta's life gets a new direction

Sangeeta Saini said, "I became unemployed due to the lockdown and my beauty parlour and cosmetic business got closed." None of her relatives was giving loan without charging interest and in the bank too, one cannot get an interest-free loan. "I got a loan without interest from the state government for which I express my gratitude to chief minister Ashok Gehlot," she said.

Mukhyamantri Kisan Mitra Urja Yojana

Zero Agriculture Electricity Bill

Amararam, a farmer from Merta in Nagaur district said that his tube well is fitted with a 10Kw transformer, but was not able to pay the bill as his financial condition was not good. After the launching of the Mukhyamantri Kisan Mitra Urja Yojana, his electricity bill became zero that too without giving any application. He thanked Gehlot as this scheme has resolved his financial problem.

Got support from the discount in agriculture electricity bill

Similarly, Mukesh Meena, a farmer from Jheel village in Dausa district who is dependent on farming said that he got support from Mukhyamantri Kisan Mitra Urja Yojana. The money that he earlier used to pay the agriculture electricity bill is now used for his studies and improving farming.

Rajiv Gandhi Krishak Sathi Sahayata Yojana

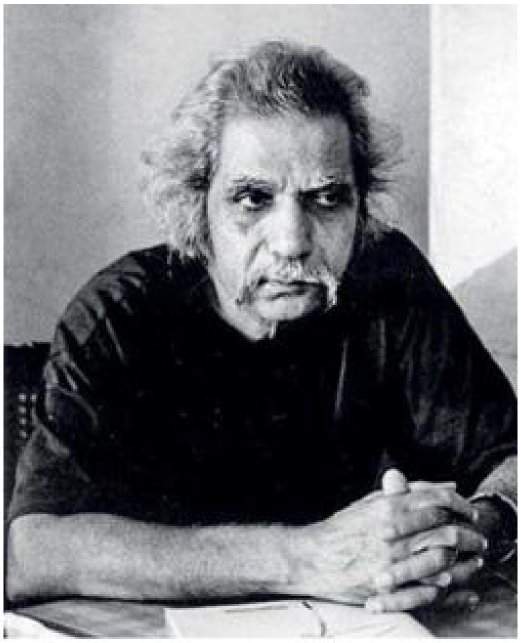
A farmer gets economic assistance of Rs 2 lakh in this scheme on suffering any disability or dies while doing farming-related work. Binsa Devi, of Jamwa Ramgarh in Jaipur district expressing gratitude to chief minister Ashok Gehlot, said that this scheme has provided relief to many farmers like her. This scheme is proving to be a boon to provide support to farmers and agriculture labourers. She lost her two fingers while doing agriculture work. She got free treatment under the Chiranjeevi Yojana and also got assistance amount.

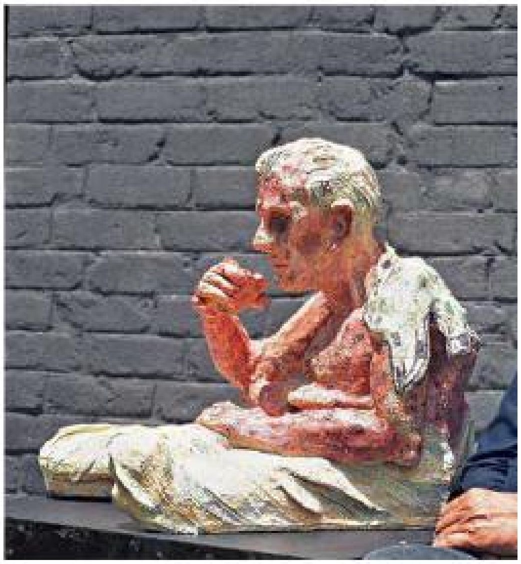
LUMINARIES OF THE NATIVE TONGUE

A polyglot's very personal guide to his own pantheon of writers in some of India's many languages

By **G.N. DEVY**

English, Marathi and Gujarati writer; man behind the People's Linguistic Survey of India





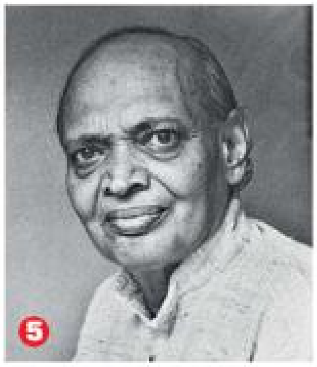
To talk of outstanding Indian writers of the past eight decades, choosing them from over two dozen languages except English and Hindi, is like returning from a majestic river with just a bucketful of water. One does not have to state that such a selection, with whatever parameters one makes it, is bound to be arbitrary and quite close to being absurd. India's literary wealth during these decades has been so vast and inspiring that it is impossible to speak of the literary flavour of post-Independence India through sketchy comments on just a handful of writers and poets. Yet I shall do so, knowing that my comments do not amount to literary judgement.

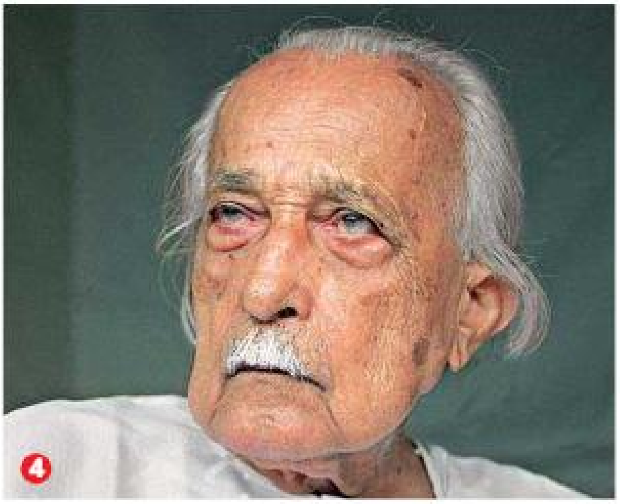
Although following the iconic Marathi poet-novelist B.S. Mardhekar, who brought to Marathi the modern sensibility, Dilip Purushottam Chitre and Arun Kolatkar stand out as the most creative. Both have often been mentioned as being of the same calibre as the most important Marathi poet, Tukaram (17th century). They wrote when Marathi poetry saw a unique blossoming through the work of their contemporary poets Saraland Rage, Grace, Aarati Prabhu, Namdeo Dhasal, Narayan Surve and Bhalchandra Nemade. Both of them were bilingual and translated from English to Marathi and from Marathi to English. Both had gained literary status in English and both were at ease with diverse literary traditions. Yet, their work in Marathi comes across as their better poetic production. Kolatkar's early poems were published in literary magazines and before the publication of the anthology of his poems *Arun Kolatkarchya Kavita* in 1976, he had established his reputation as one of the most important poets in Marathi. *Jejuri*, his anthology in English, brought him the Commonwealth Poetry Prize and his poetry received international recognition in the field of English literature. Kolatkar had also published several other books, including an anthology edited by Chitre in 1965. The bilingual Marathi-English compositions need to be viewed in the context of the historical context of bilingualism in literature.

HEMANT CHAWLA

YASBANT NEGI

RAWAL SHAILESH





1. Arun Kolatkar *(Marathi)*

2. Girish Karnad *(Kannada)*

3. Mahashweta Devi *(Bangla)*

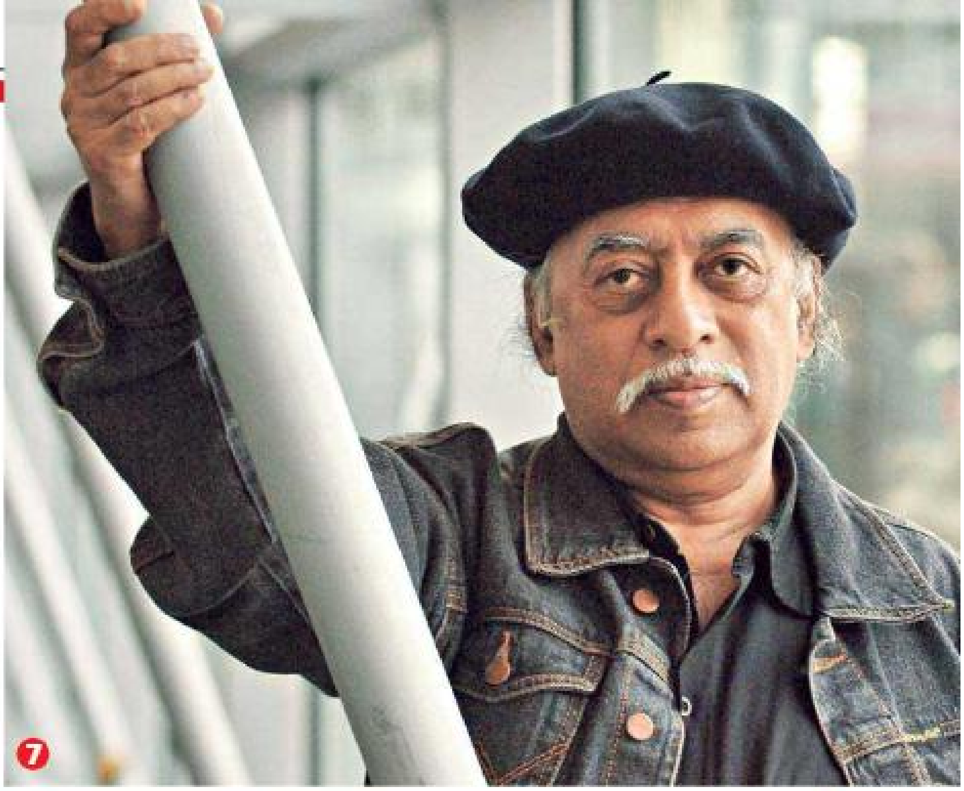
4. Shivarama Karanth *(Kannada)*

5. Suresh Joshi *(Gujarati)*

6. Bhupen Khakhar *(Gujarati)*

The tension that once prevailed in the relation of Sanskrit and Prakrit or Desi languages and Persian exists now between Indian languages and English. It is not sufficient to note that Chitre and Kolatkar were bilingual poets. Chitre was a painter and film-maker. Kolatkar, too, was a painter and a graphic artist. Chitre called his tryst with several languages and forms of creativity as "living a life on a bridge", trying to connect different worlds. "I have been working in a haunted workshop rattled and shaken by the spirits of other literatures unknown to my ancestors. In fact, unknown spirits claim to be my literary ancestors clamouring for recognition. Europe has already haunted my house. A larger Indian tradition besieges it too...this is my predicament as a writer. I have to build a bridge within myself between India and Europe, or else I become a fragmented person." (*The Bombay Literary Review*, 1989-1). Kolatkar's Marathi poems used surrealism and imagism very effectively. His poem *Takta*, based on the Marathi alphabet, strikes one as characteristically unique. In sharp contrast to this, the god Khandoba and different deities and myths known in every household of Maharashtra also find place in his poems, like in 'Chaitanya': "*Come off it/ Said Chaitanya to a stone/ in stone language/ Wipe the red paint off your face/ I don't think the colour suits you/ I mean what's wrong/ with being just a plain stone/ I'll still bring you flowers/ You like the flowers of Zendu/ don't you/ I like them too/ scratch a rock/ and a legend springs*." The heart of the literary art of Chitre and Kolatkar lay in inventing style and expression where their predecessors thought literature had reached its limits.

The two Gujarati writers who must be mentioned are Suresh Joshi and Bhupen Khakhar. Both were exiles of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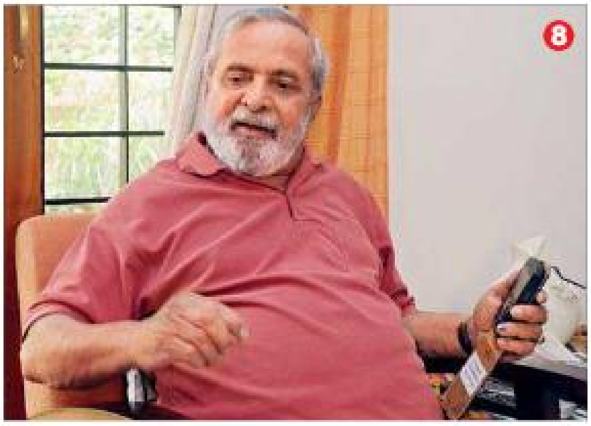
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7. **Dilip Purushottam Chitre**
(Marathi)

8. **U.R. Ananthamurthy**
(Kannada)

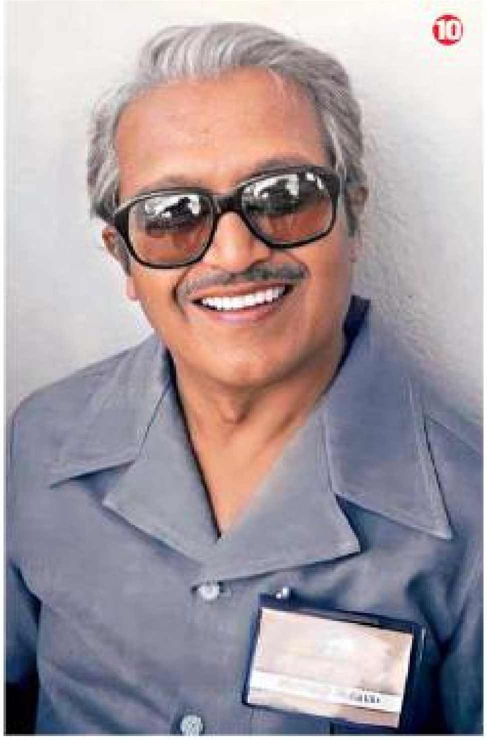
sorts in the literary scene in Gujarati. Khakhar was known primarily as a painter of international fame, and though he wrote an intriguing play, *Maujila Manilal*, and several short and long stories, writers of his time hardly ever thought of him as a 'writer'. The literary establishment was inimical to Suresh Joshi because he was greatly different, had imbibed many literary traditions and was brutally intolerant of mediocrity. Joshi lived passionately in the company of words and ideas with a profound human commitment. He taught, lectured, wrote, edited and published incessantly for over three decades to keep alive the lifeline of a culture he saw being dehumanised day by day. *Vani*, *Manisha*, *Kshitij*, *Uhapoh*, *Etad*, *Sayujya* and *Setu*—the journals he edited, established and abandoned, have become synonymous with his name. His own oeuvre, especially prose, both critical and creative, changed the tenor of Gujarati diction. *Gruhpravesh*, his first collection, transformed the linear short story into a web-like structure of organic complexity. Khakhar had to face scorn and violence for being a homosexual. Joshi had to face isolation due to his sharp criticism of his contemporaries. Yet Joshi's works, like *Janantike*, *Gruhpravesh* and *Chhinnapatra*, were recognised by Gujarati readers as being in a class by themselves immediately on their publication. Khakhar expressed his disdain for the world by using an uncanny sense of humour. Turning a piece of 'foreign soap' into a device to comment on the frailties and passions of ordinary folk, he could span the profoundly philosophical with the utmost mundane with an ease that Gujarati literature has not known before or since. Bhupen spent most of his energy in painting a landscape peopled by observant and ugly faces and bodies. Together, they posited a new idea of beauty in Gujarati letters. The Gujarat of today would hardly have tolerated their presence.

I have spent close to three decades of my life in Maharashtra and over three decades in Gujarat. It is natural for me to speak of the Marathi and Gujarati writers of my choice. However, one more language that has deeply impacted my literary taste is Kannada. It has had a major place in my life and mind through a series of personal circumstances. Of Kannada writers, the ones who made deep impact on me have been Girish Karnad, Shantinath Desai and U.R. Ananthamurthy. The ones I shall recommend to those who would like to read Kannada literature are Tejaswi Purnachandra and Vivek Shanbag. The ones I adore the most are Shivarama Karanth and Devanoor Mahadeva. I had read Ananthamurthy's *Sanskara* soon after it appeared in the English translation by A.K. Ramanujan. I used to meet Ananthamurthy when I was a young lecturer and he a professor at Mysore University. Later, he moved to Kerala and I moved to Gujarat to teach at Baroda. However, when he headed the National Book Trust and, later, the Sahitya Akademi, we met frequently. He supported my idea of giving up my university job and moving into an Adivasi village. But these were personal matters. I was aware of his literary standing, had read all his works and got some of them translated into Gujarati. What made me respect him more than I did other writers was his courage to openly espouse social causes. During his last year, he wrote a somewhat rushed, though passion-

9. **Devanoor Mahadeva** *(Kannada)*

10. **Shantinath Desai** *(Kannada)*

BCCL



ate, book comparing Gandhi's idea of Swaraj and the RSS ideology of Hindutva. It required courage and conviction, which he had in plenty.

Girish Karnad, the celebrated playwright, cinema actor, film-maker, too, has been a favourite writer. For one, he understood theatre as a medium as minutely as Satyajit Ray knew cinema as a medium of expression. I have seen his plays in performance in Karnataka, Gujarat and Maharashtra. They were equally effective in all three languages. I met him last when he came to Dharwad for a literary meeting. After that, I met him in Bangalore at a public meeting where he displayed a sign that read, 'I, too, am an urban Naxalite' in defiance of the fear and intimidation being spread. The activist fervour that Ananthamurthy and Karnad displayed was seen in Shivarama Karanth's work. His peers, like D.R. Bendre and K.V. Puttappa, also had social awareness as the central element of their writing. In my understanding, Karanth surpassed them. The writer Devanoor Mahadeva is also a leading activist in Karnataka, a person chasing the difficult contours of the question of equality with intensity. All of them have given Kannada literature its progressive character.

Bengali writer Mahashweta Devi came to be intimately related with my life as an Adivasi rights activist. In the early 1980s, I had launched *Setu*, a journal of literary translations, and was keen to have a Mahashweta Devi story for it. Her own translations of *Death of Jagmohan*, *The Elephant* and *Seeds* appeared in *Setu*. The manuscripts looked uninviting: typed in the smallest possible font size on sheets smudged with blue carbon. Yet, their realism and political analysis made them great stories. I knew that she had written about the kind of India that was mine too. In the mid-'90s, I decided to invite her to Baroda for a lecture on the Denotified Tribes. The Jnanpith and Magsaysay awards given to her in 1996-1997 made things a bit difficult. Nevertheless, she accepted my invitation. She spoke at length about the Adivasi struggle at Palamau, about her adventures collecting material on Laxmibai of Jhansi, and how she lost the Jnanpith award cheque given to her by Nelson Mandela. Her lecture was deeply moving. She spoke of the civilisational graces of the Adivasis, of how our society has mindlessly destroyed their culture, and how innocent persons are brutalised. She described the context in which the infamous Criminal Tribes Act, 1871, was introduced, the process of denotification in 1952 and the plight of the nomadic communities in India ever since. She then narrated the gruesome episode of the custodial death of Budhan Sabar in Purulia. The next day, in Baroda, we formed the Denotified and Nomadic Tribes Rights Action Group, the DNT-RAG. We travelled the length and breadth of India in quest of knowing the lives and stories of the Denotified and Nomadic Tribes, communities that had been wrongly branded during the colonial times as 'criminal tribes.' We continued our campaign for many years till the central government appointed a National DNT Commission.

Between visits to Delhi and travels in Maharashtra, she made frequent trips to Gujarat. Baroda became her second home, Tejgadh her sacred grove for communion with the Adivasis. "In Tejgadh alone," she said, "my bones will find rest. Ganesh, you will understand, I am tired, of it all, this praise, and this deification. I hate it."

I often wondered about the source of Mahashweta's strength, the literary influences that shaped her powerful style, the political philosophies that contributed to the making of her ideology. She never confessed to having influences, except that of the film-maker Ritwik Ghatak, her uncle. I am amazed how someone like her, slated to be a middle-class housewife, had managed to transcend so many prisons to become what she was—a writer with a frightening economy of words.

These very few writers I have mentioned stand out in the literary history of India since Independence. However, these are but a few and have their peers in other languages, who are equally worthy of being mentioned. Had there been space enough, I would have done that. ■

By **NANDINI BHALLA**

Editor, Cosmopolitan

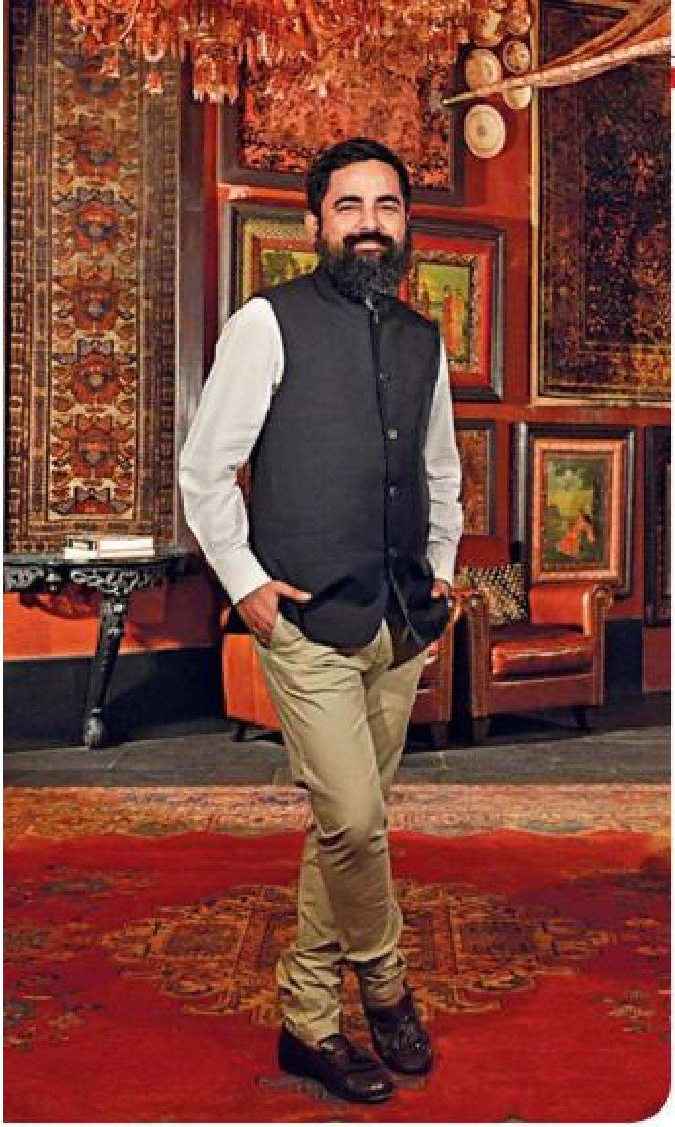
Haute Favourites

Breathtaking bridal wear, intricate handwork, local designs: the Indian fashion world is powered by innovation and elan, but also tradition, and these designers have revolutionised it in no small measure

GETTY IMAGES

Rohit Bal

They might call him the 'Enfant Terrible' of Indian fashion, but Rohit Bal's work has always been as sensational as his reputation. The Kashmir-born, Delhi-based fashion designer makes a statement with his iconic lotus and peacock motifs, embroidered intricately in his couture pieces. The drama carries forward in his opulent showcases as well, not to mention his impeccable handwork and attention to detail. *TIME* magazine featured him in 1996, hailing him as 'India's Master of Fabric and Fantasy'.



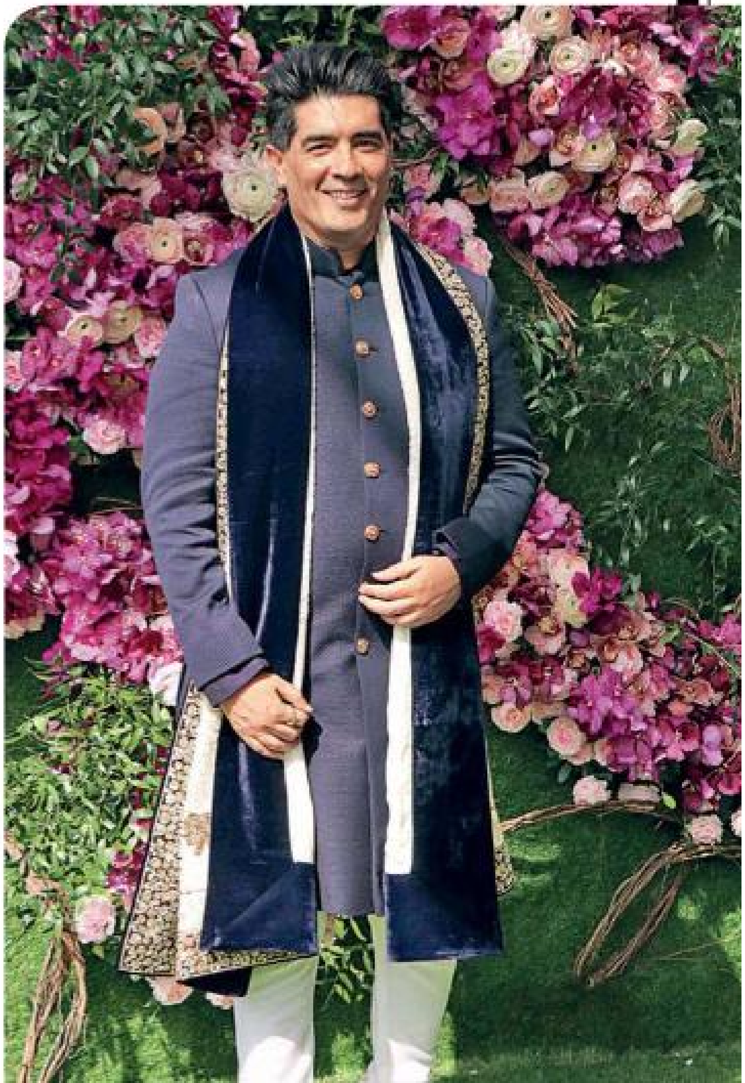
MANDAR DEODHAR

Sabyasachi Mukherjee

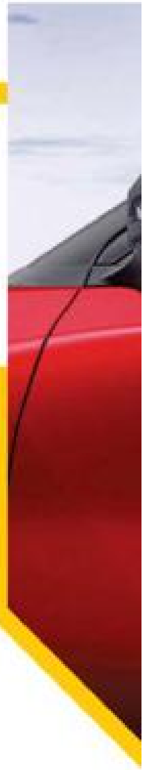
There is no such thing as understatement in the Sabyasachi Mukherjee playbook. Opulence is the designer's hallmark and a 'Sabyasachi Bride' an aspiration for royalty of different stripes—Bollywood or business. A master storyteller, he is known for his revivalist approach towards Indian fashion as well as his arresting campaigns celebrating body positivity. The Kolkata-based couturier does not believe in half-measures, his resplendent regal stores a testimony to that fact. New York opened its doors to his first international store; his jewellery line and home decor range had already found a niche in the city's luxury department store Bergdorf Goodman. Mukherjee has also become the first Indian designer to collaborate with high street brand H&M, which has previously worked with Versace, Lanvin, Roberto Cavalli, among others. Why, he's even lending colour and his name to wallpapers and paints by Asian Paints.

Manish Malhotra

He was dressing Bollywood celebs long before it became de rigueur to have a stylist put your look together. Manish Malhotra had dressed Karisma Kapoor and Madhuri Dixit in *Dil To Pagal Hai* [1997], Kajol and Rani Mukherjee in *Kuch Kuch Hota Hai* [1998] and Kareena Kapoor Khan in *Kabhi Khushi Kabhie Gham...* [2001]. But it was what he did for Urmila Matondkar in *Rangeela* [1995]—in crop tops and high-waisted jeans, skirts with thigh-high slits, shorts with belts—that burnished his go-to designer credentials. In 2005 came his eponymous label for bridal wear and men's formals. More recently, fashion circles welcomed Manish Malhotra Beauty, the first-ever haute couture make-up line, which the serial entrepreneur has launched with beauty conglomerate MyGlamm. Behind all the glamour is hard work—Malhotra has worked extensively to revive *chikankari* and Kashmiri embroidery. He is also closely associated with the Mijwan Welfare Society, which works for the empowerment of women—with whom he does a show every year.



MILIND SHELTE



Maruti Suzuki
DRIVEN BY SAFETY

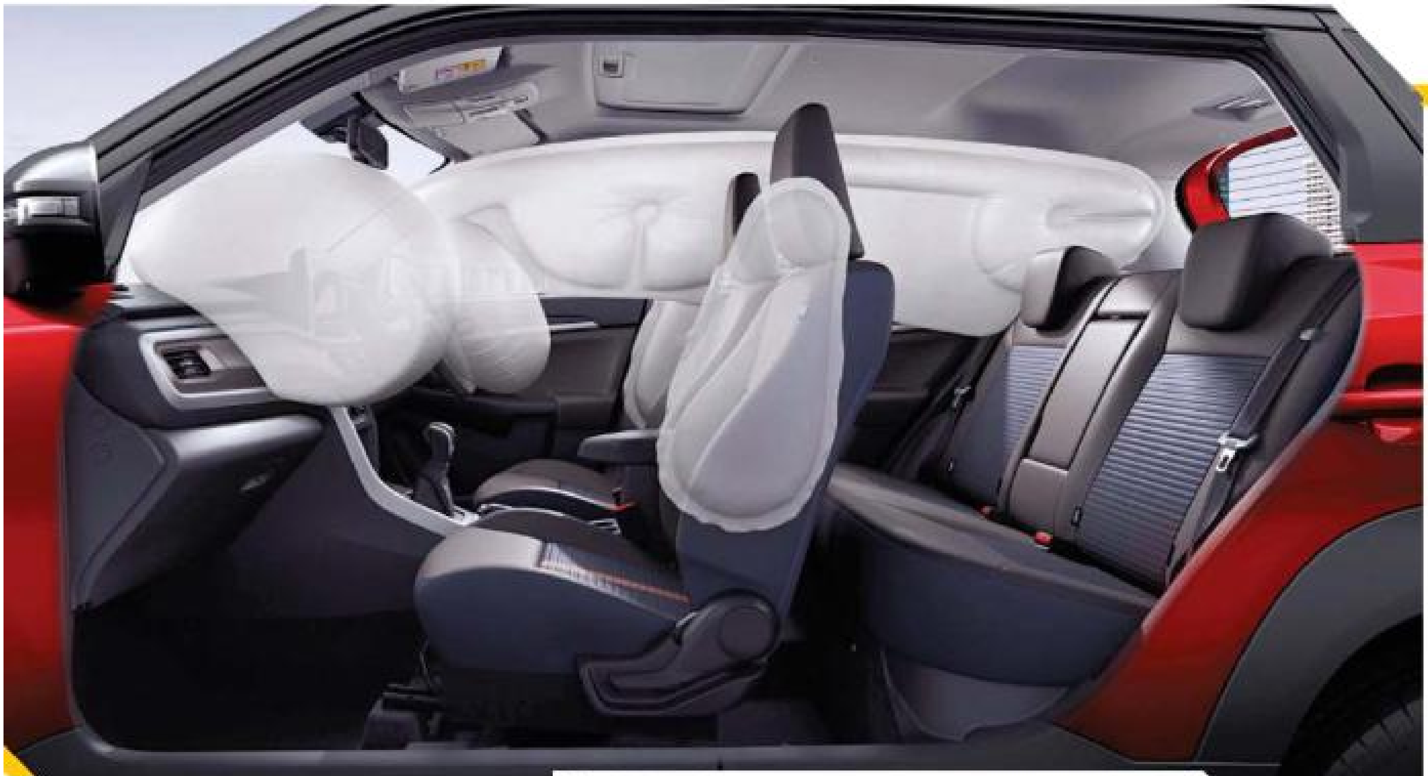
The essence of safety for Maruti Suzuki lies in a symphony of factors including safety features, vehicle structure and the promotion of proper driving etiquette. Offering insight into Maruti Suzuki's holistic approach to making Indian roads safer.

It is often that a conversation about the safety aspects of a car begins with a discussion about the build quality of the vehicle, its crash test rating and the dependability of its platform. This belief that a vehicle's safety performance and its crashworthiness are solely dependent on thickness and weight of sheet metal used in the manufacturing is a bit obsolete. The presence of advanced active and passive safety measures in a vehicle is just as important as a capable structure when it comes to protecting occupants. At Maruti Suzuki, the focus on safety is paramount and to this effect, the company uses an amalgamation of active and passive safety features in their cars while using their vast network of training facilities to impart proper driving behaviour in India.

Safety is a function of many aspects including active safety, passive safety and most importantly driving behaviour. Maruti Suzuki is at the forefront of incorporating many active as well as passive safety features in its vehicles. Active safety features such as a 360 View Camera, Head Up Display, Electronic Stability Program (ESP) while passive safety includes Airbags, Seat belt and crumple zones in the vehicle structure ensure a complete safety net. Another key aspect of safety is driving behaviour, which refers to the behaviour of individuals while driving and in the perspective of safety includes many improper habits such as overspeeding, excessive braking, failure to use indicators before changing direction, incorrect lane driving, wrong side driving et cetera pose a threat to the occupants of that vehicle and to others on the road.

With the progress in technology, the level of safety features available in cars has improved significantly over the years. A few years ago, airbags, ABS and EBD were rarely available in mass-market cars but today it is a part of standard fitment. There are newer features too, such as the Head Up Display (HUD) which provides all necessary data right in the line-of-sight of a driver. Maruti Suzuki has also started offering the 360 View Camera in a lot of their models which is useful in navigating tight parking spots thanks to the 360 degree view around the car.

6 Airbags (front, side & curtain) for improved passenger safety



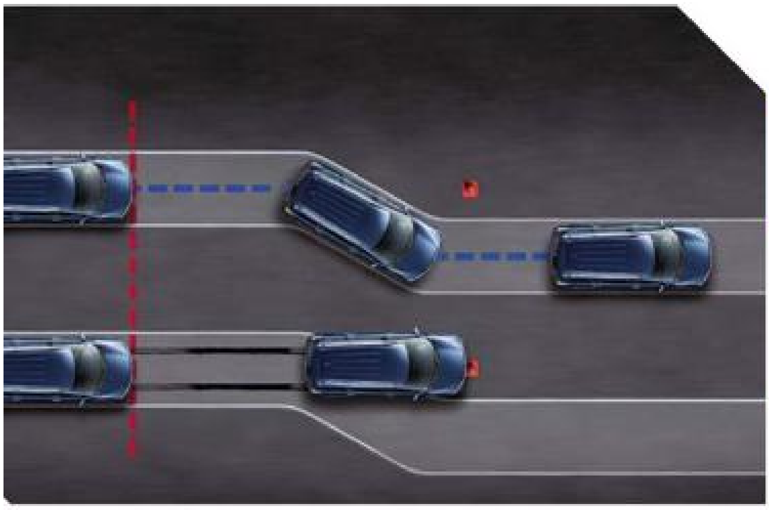
All cars undergo rigorous crash testing at Maruti Suzuki's Research & Development Facility

Often vehicles get into collisions as a secondary impact of another accident or in the process of avoiding one. Many Maruti Suzuki cars have Electronic Stability Program that helps to control vehicle during cornering if the front or the rear wheels skid. It also assists you in maintaining traction while accelerating on loose or slippery road surfaces. It does this by regulating the engine output, and by selectively applying the brakes.

Maruti Suzuki offers six airbags in the multiple variants across many models while two airbags are standard across the model range. The Front Seat belts in Maruti Suzuki cars come with PTFL (Pre-tensioners and Force Limiter) which are able to restrain occupants to their seats while the Force Limiter works to minimize forces on occupants chest by releasing the belt gradually. Safety of one's family is paramount and for families with young children even more so. Maruti Suzuki offers ISOFIX mounts in the rear seats and child lock on the doors of their cars ensuring the safety of young ones.

While these active and passive safety features are very effective in avoiding collision and protecting occupants it is also the mix of shock absorbing rigid structures in the platform of a vehicle. Maruti Suzuki employs the Suzuki Tect and the Heartect platform for its cars. Both platforms use Ultra high strength steel (UHSS) and advanced high strength steel (HSS) which are much stronger when compared to the standard

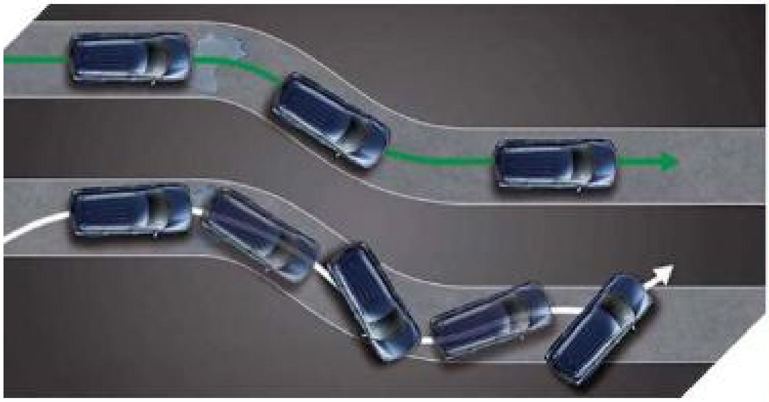
Maruti Suzuki has equipped new products with state-of-the-art safety features like head-up display and 360 view camera



ABS with EBD The Anti-Lock Braking System (ABS) and the Electronic Brake Force Distribution (EBD) works in concert to ensure efficient and effective braking

MARUTI SUZUKI
DRIVING SCHOOL

Maruti Suzuki has a network of over 500 Driving Schools using state of the art simulator and quality vehicle training



Electronic Stability Program helps in improved vehicle control and stability.

ISOFIX Child Seat Anchorages ensure that children who require a child seat are strapped in securely.

automotive-grade steel. This creates safety zone that prevents structural deformation. On the other hand, crumple zones in the front and rear help absorb collision impact.

In pursuit of improving the levels of road safety in India, Maruti Suzuki has established an expansive network of over 500 Maruti Suzuki Driving School (MSDS) in 242 cities. It has also established the Institute of Driver Training and Research (IDTR) across multiple states in India. The aim of these IDTRs is to impart training to passenger and commercial vehicle drivers. Bringing increased transparency and technology Maruti Suzuki has established Automated Driving Testing Tracks (ADTC) in partnership with the Delhi Government. Apart from imparting proper driving skills to beginners, Maruti Suzuki has also set up Traffic Safety Management Systems (TSMS) in collaboration with Delhi Police at thirteen high-volume traffic areas in Delhi. The system uses high-definition cameras and radars to capture vehicles flouting traffic laws like overspeeding, red-light violation, stop line violation and wrong side driving making the process of e-challan generation streamlined.

Maruti Suzuki believes in creating safer cars, and uses a very capable platform along with a host of advanced active and passive safety features to ensure the safety of occupants. The brand's role in safety is however not limited to making their products safer but also transcends into making India's roads safer. Maruti Suzuki's IDTR has been working upon imparting proper driving etiquettes and improving road safety as well as educating budding drivers via MSDS.

BANDEEP SINGH

Rahul Mishra

It's not every day that you find yourself in the company of Yves Saint Laurent or Karl Lagerfeld. Rahul became the first Indian designer to join their ranks when he won the prestigious International Woolmark Prize for 2013/ 14. Mishra's innovations are not only in design—where he has crafted a whole new language by use of multiple embroidery techniques such as French knots, *aari*, *zardozi* and styles invented in his atelier on imaginative handloom designs. The designer has also successfully implemented reverse migration for his artisans, encouraging them to work from their villages rather than in the tough, crowded environs of the cities. The firsts don't end here, they still keep coming. In 2020, Mishra became the first Indian designer to present his work at the Paris Haute Couture Week.

Anita Dongre

When the Princess of Wales, Kate Middleton, wore a customised dress by Anita Dongre on her maiden visit to India in 2016, her website crashed. Dongre herself takes fame in her stride, focusing instead on her passion project: empowering the women of Rajasthan and Gujarat to preserve their local craft. Female artisans from Kutch dressed in traditional attire were the showstoppers in her show for the Lakme Fashion Week in Mumbai in 2015. A strong advocate of animal rights and sustainability, Dongre has also long expounded on the merits of slow fashion. Her sub-label, Grassroot, retails a fusion line that marries the crafts of India, such as Ahir embroidery from Gujarat, Ikat from Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh, Warli patterns from Maharashtra, and hand-block prints on matka silk from Bhagalpur. She is now taking her fashion and message abroad as she opens two boutiques in New York showcasing her eponymous bridal line, jewellery and accessories. *Fortune India* put her on its list of 50 Most Powerful Women in Business in 2013. A power that has only grown since.

MANDAR DEODHAR

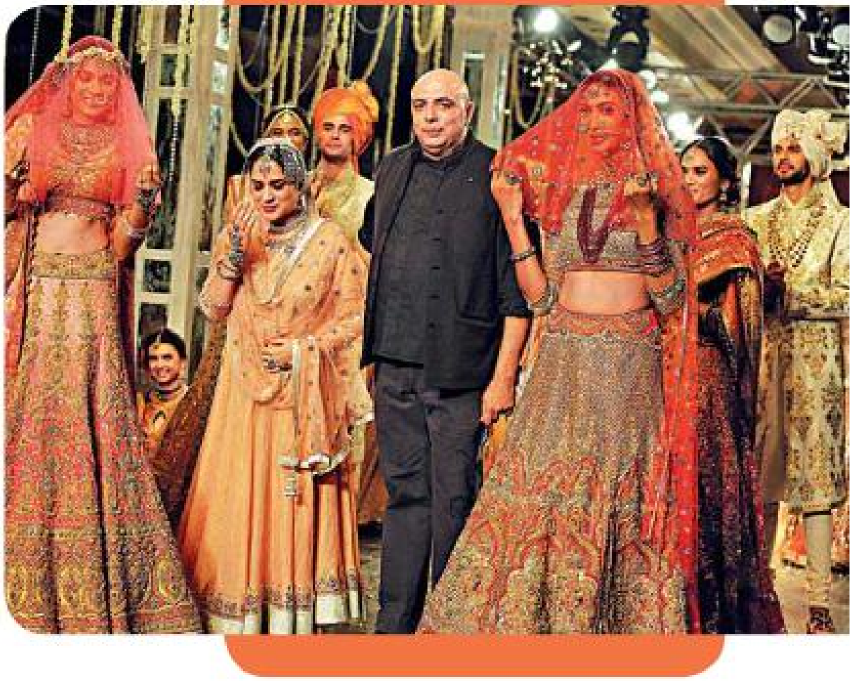
Rohit Khosla

Long before designer labels and stores, there was the ubiquitous boutique. This was where the ladies flocked to, to realise their fashion fantasies. Then, in 1987, Rohit Khosla launched Ensemble, the multi-designer boutique in Mumbai that he co-founded with Tarun and Shailja Tahiliani, and the Indian fashion world was never the same again. Ensemble was where one could buy ready-to-wear creations from Khosla's eponymous brand, Tarun Tahiliani, Abu Jani Sandeep Khosla, American designer Neil Bieff, and Amaya. Khosla pushed designer Rohit Bal to create his first menswear range, JJ Valaya interned with him, Rina Dhaka launched her own line from Khosla's atelier, and designer Ranna Gill and Nicobar's Aparna Chandra trained with the trailblazer.

Tarun Tahiliani

No one knows how to sculpt the human form with fabric better than Tarun Tahiliani. And on no one else does the epithet 'Master of Drapes' sit better than on the veteran designer as he marries luxurious Indian textile with craftsmanship to create visions of exquisiteness. If Ensemble brought the best of Indian fashion under one roof in 1987, Tahiliani took it to the world in 2003, when he became the first Indian fashion designer to showcase his collection at the Milan Fashion Week. There are no full stops in that journey, as Tahiliani recently launched his flagship boutique in Bengaluru.

GETTY IMAGES



SUBIR HALDER

Ritu Kumar

The doyenne of Indian textile, Ritu Kumar elevated Indian weaves to their rightful place through her bridal and festive wear. Her journey began from a small village in West Bengal, Serampore, where she started an enterprise to help an out-of-work colony of handblock printers. Today, Kumar is a force of nature, with some 100 stores globally, and four brands to her name—Label Ritu Kumar, RI Ritu Kumar, aarké and Ritu Kumar Home. Among the first Indian designers to break into the fashion spaces of Paris and New York in the '70s, she is the recipient of a Padma Shri and the French Chevalier des arts et des lettres.

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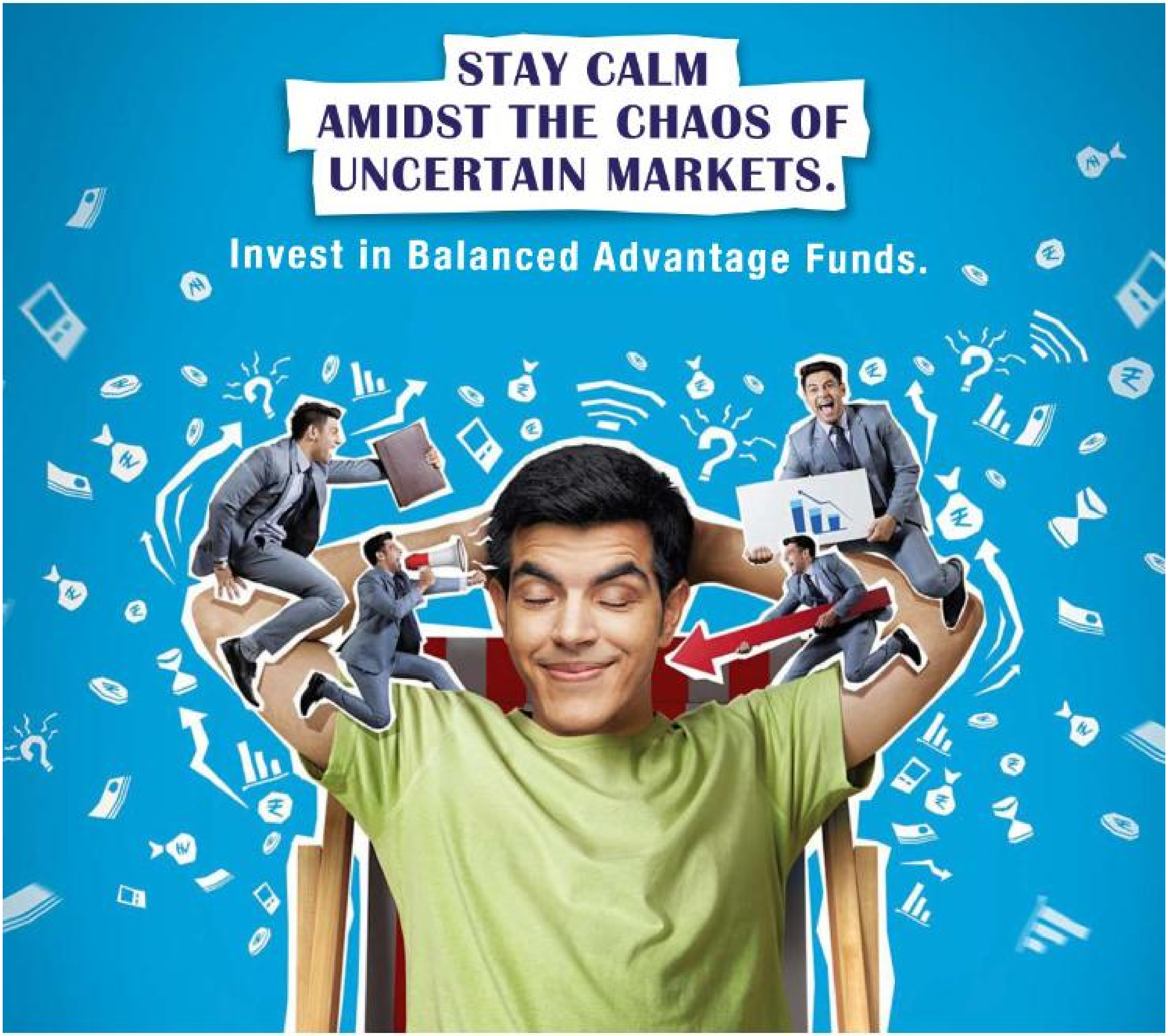
A PARTNER FOR LIFE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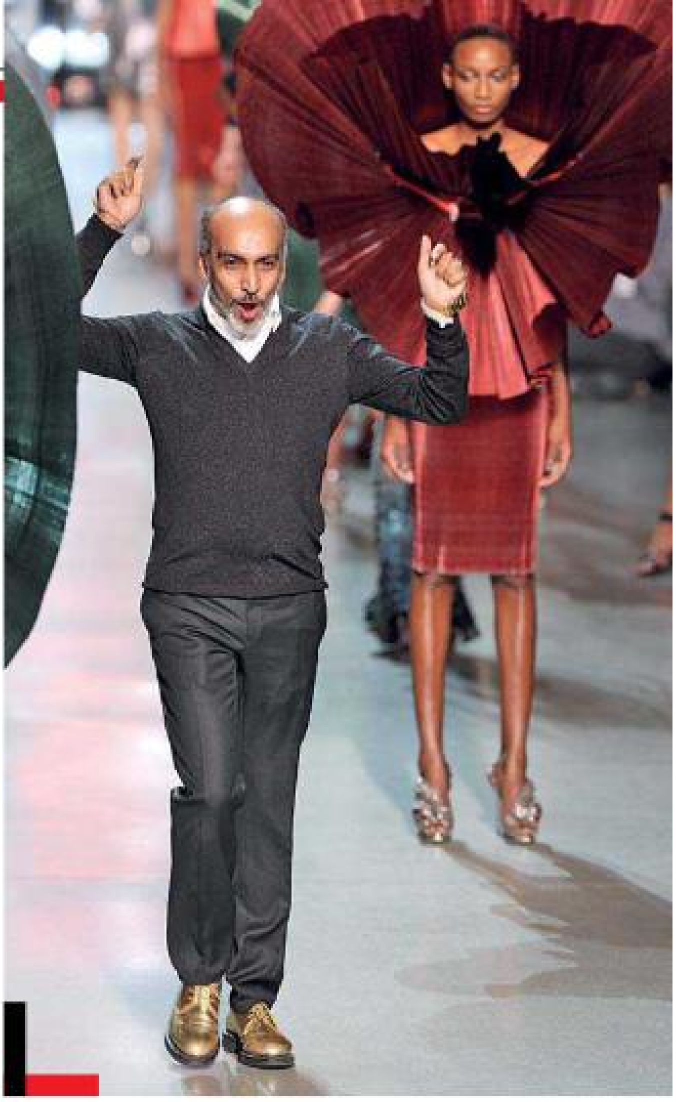
Wendell Rodricks

A man and a designer well ahead of his times, Wendell Rodricks pioneered resort wear and sustainable fashion in India way back in 1989 when he launched his label. Loose, anti-fit, flowy, draped dresses and saris in solid hues embodied the late designer's vision of comfort, silhouette and experimentation. He was the first from the country to be invited to showcase at IGEDO, Germany in 1995 as well as the first to open the Dubai Fashion Week in 2001. The Goa-based designer was also an ardent advocate of environment and LGBTQIA+ rights, and received the Padma Shri in 2014. Rodricks also launched the careers of Deepika Padukone and Anushka Sharma, who had modelled with him. He retired in 2016, and passed away in 2020.

SUBIR HALDER



Manish Arora

His high-octane, bathed-in-psychedelia, inspired-by-the-kitsch-culture couture caught the Indian fashion world by complete surprise when it first appeared under his eponymous label in 1997. Arora subsequently went on to earn the moniker of being "the John Galliano of India" and quickly grew to become a name to reckon with when he launched his second label, Fish Fry, a sportswear-styled line, in collaboration with sports footwear and clothing brand Reebok in 2001. A debut at the London Fashion Week in 2005 brought him international attention and customers, firmly etching his name in the fashion circles of the world. His works were showcased at the Victoria & Albert Museum in London in 2007. A fresh, modern way of looking at Indian design, combined with a flair for bohemian and high-energy glamour, is the hallmark of his aesthetic, as is the combination of traditional Indian embroidery, appliqué and beading on western silhouettes.

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UBLOOD:
THE 'UBER-ISATION' OF BLOOD DONATION

UBlood is revolutionizing the blood donation process through its innovative "Uber-ization" approach. This approach has been patented by the founder Jagadeesh Yalamanchili. UBlood makes it easier for donors to register and receive blood during what is commonly referred to as "the golden hour". This ground-breaking concept is transforming the way blood is donated and ensuring that more people have access to this life-saving resource.

Dr. Jagadeesh Babu Yalamanchili, Founder , UBlood App

Jagadeesh, has won several awards for this noble gesture, including being recognised in the High Range Book of World Records and bagging the Society Achievers Award 2022. That's not all. He has also been awarded a doctorate.

Creating a more unified India, by encouraging blood donation

India is a vast country, home to a whopping 75 crore eligible donors. To connect with these potential givers and celebrate World Blood Donation Day this year, Jagadeesh found the perfect person to help - actor Sonu Sood. Using Google analytics to find the best face for the cause, Jagadeesh was able to bring his initiative to life. Sonu Sood's philanthropic efforts during the COVID-19 pandemic have been widely recognized, making him the ideal ambassador for Jagadeesh's endeavor. The platform was launched in Andhra Pradesh with Sonu Sood in attendance.

UBLOOD
UBLOOD
UBLOOD

We are making our presence felt in mega metropolitan cities and mini metro cities. This will give UBlood an access to 18-25 crore people.

Bridging the gap between blood donors and receivers

Today, a platform is available for free registration of donors across India. UBlood is not a hospital, blood bank, pathology lab, emergency van or doctor, but rather a connection between them. In moments of urgent need, specialist attending to victims can access the app to find the nearest donor to match the needed blood

group. By providing this bridge, the platform can ensure that help is available in the most critical of times.

Streamlining blood donation processes for the wider population.

UBlood is revolutionizing the way we seek for blood donors. Finding donors in your area is now simpler than ever thanks to UBlood's innovative geo-search tools. In addition, our real-time connect function decreases wait times while requesting and donating blood. To guarantee that all stakeholders involved in the process are kept up to speed, our alerts tool sends out updates on all blood requests and indicates when a donor is available. We are grateful for the assistance of several doctors and academics who are professionals in the field of blood donation. For those wishing to streamline their blood donor search, UBlood is the go-to solution.

UBlood – The brainchild of Jagadeesh Yalamanchili

Inspired to create an app that could potentially save lives, Jagadeesh Yalamanchili created the UBlood App. He vividly remembers the nine days he spent with his father-in-law in his final stages, and his appreciation for him as a great man in Vijayawada, Andhra Pradesh. His devotion to his family and his mission to save lives show that blood truly is thicker than water. The death of Apple's visionary co-founder Steve Jobs too shook him. A teetotaler from then on, Jagadeesh strived to do something that he will be remembered for.

Jagadeesh credits the success of UBlood to his beloved friend Ranjit Raghuram Venkata, who died recently after suffering from a liver condition. He had assisted him tremendously in shaping and firming this idea into a start-up. His creative methods to bring this effort to market is the driving force behind the success of UBlood.

For 34 years, Jagadeesh had been building his career in software staffing solutions. This Non-Resident Indian in the United States has now decided to take things to the next level by creating a start-up to help the global community. UBlood, his new venture, has already made a positive impact in the lives of many. Jagadeesh's idea for UBlood grew out of his desire to help people. His plan developed into a technology-based strategy, which he saw as a way to really make a difference. Thanks to his Master's degree in engineering and management, he has been able to apply his knowledge and build a successful business from the ground up. UBlood is an innovative start-up that is changing the world for the better. Jagadeesh's ambition for the company is to continue to provide assistance to individuals and organizations around the world.

Please download the UBlood App today and become a 'USaver'. It is one life-saving tool that everyone should have on their phone. So, do recommend this app to your relatives, friends, and colleagues.

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By **GAURAV MAZUMDAR**

Sitar exponent, composer. Grammy nominee

High Priests of Raga

Indian classical music is no static realm. Breathing, evolving...its passage through the last century was a testimony to its life-force. Ten luminati on whom its ancient grammar was borne aloft to new skies

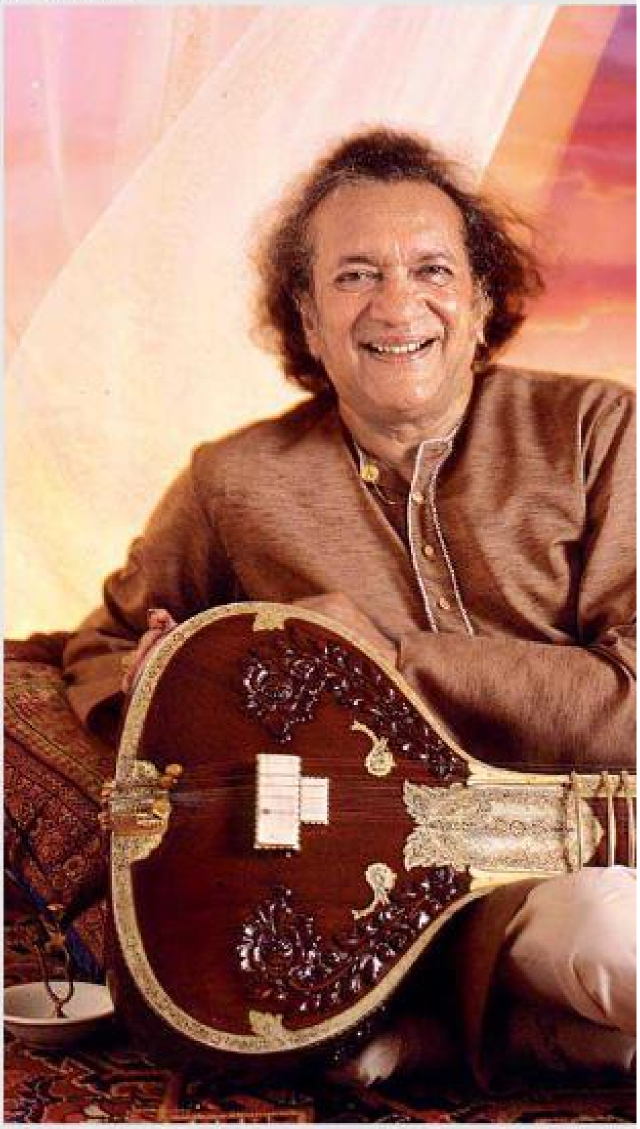
BCCL

M.S. Subbulakshmi

(1916-2004)

The Hindu devotional side of south India wakes up to her *Suprabhatam* that floats out to greet every dawn. From the Devadasi tradition like dancer T. Balasaraswati, her divine voice—sweet, with hints of savoury, and amazingly nimble—gave Carnatic a national and global presence. Aside from a detour to film with *Meera* (1945), she stayed with her forte: pitch-perfect kritis and bhajans like *Annapurnashtakam*.

GETTY IMAGES



Pt Ravi Shankar

(1920-2012)

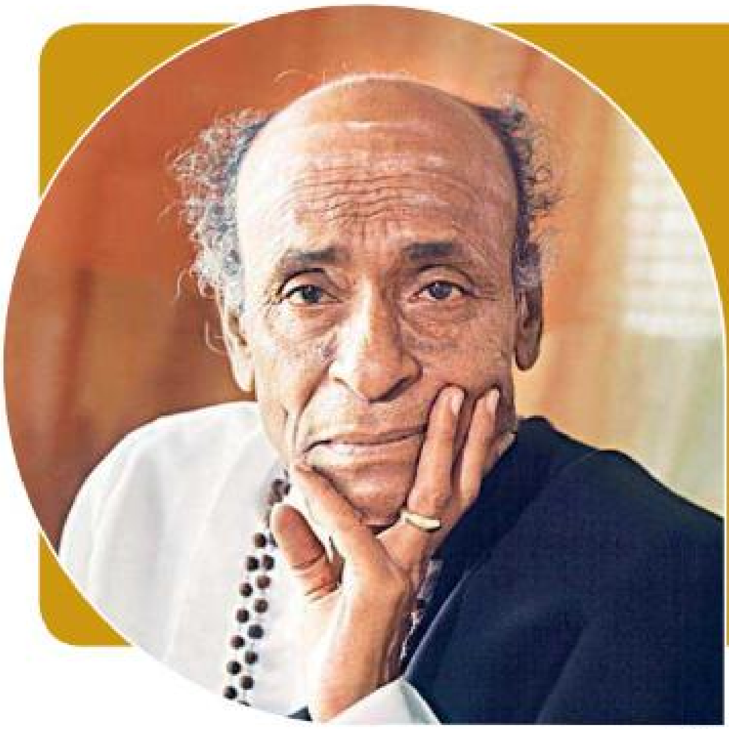
Taking Indian classical music to the world as its most universally recognised envoy, parlaying that profile to popularise it within India...yet, the versatile genius stayed an enigma. He answered to a liberal ethic: witness his original collaborations, orchestral creations with both Indian and western instruments and artistes, and creation of original ragas. But he anchored it in the creative orthodoxy of his guru, Baba Allauddin Khan—never once departing from the purity of a raga. His sitar work is a canon in itself, a seed mantra for posterity.

Ustad Bismillah Khan

(1916-2006)

Taking a humble reed instrument from the temples and ghats of Varanasi to the Red Fort on the day of our Independence in 1947, he also gave freedom to the shehnai to soar and become a mainstream classical concert instrument. Before him, no could have imagined the hard-textured, shrill timbre of this Indian oboe essaying the complex patterns of raga music. The deceptive ease with which he did it sat naturally with his simple Banarasi charm.

AFP



BCCL

Pt Mallikarjun Mansur

(1910-1992)

A man of the soil, Mansurji brought rare ragas and bandishes to the concert stage with his simple yet highly evocative presentation. An inborn flair for the melodic elaboration and interpretation patented by his Jaipur-Atrauli Gharana, and his deliciously smoky voice with that latent Carnatic trace intact, breathed subtle fire into compositions.

INDIA PICTURE

Ustad Bade Ghulam Ali Khan

(1902-1968)

A maestro difficult to box into categories—even his Patiala Gharana. From the intricate filigree work he wove so casually into his singing, whether a sombre Marwa or a nakhra-filled thumri, to the sapat taans that flowed like a river in spate, to the three-octave voice that seemed able to swell to a baritone or slenderise to a soprano at will, he was an elemental force. His *Prem Jogan Ban* in Sohini for *Mughal-E-Azam* poses a sonorous what-if to film music; his *Hari Om Tatsat* is a touchstone for bhajan.

Begum Akhtar

(1914-1974)

The diva with a base layer of melancholy in her renditions is iconic both in the world of ghazal and thumri. Born at a time when the old aesthetic universe of the tawaifs was being challenged by colonial-era prudery, she reclaimed a new cachet for tradition with the sheer expressiveness of her singing and clarity of enunciation, deriving soul and feel from her life, as it were.

BCCL

BANDEEP SINGH

Kishori Amonkar

(1932-2017)

Daughter of the Jaipur Gharana doyenne Mogubai Kurdikar, Kishoriji led her life and music on her own terms. A perfectionist, she would only step onto stage to sing once her tanpuras were totally in tune. This at times would delay her concerts, but die-hard fans never minded the wait, because what ensued would be the purest statements of a hallowed inner being. Her spiritual and musical quest, both being inextricable, was woven out of a certain self-defined purity. Her *Biraha Bamana* in Bhimpalasi could give pause to a storm, and her rendition of Bhupali—*Sahela Re*—not only defines who she was but also the beauty that is Hindustani music.

INDIA PICTURE

M. Balamuralikrishna

(1930-2016)

On no one would the word genius fit as well as on Balamuralikrishna. Actor, composer, no mean hand on the viola, violin and mridangam—and, above all, that singing. Besides being a charismatic star within the grammar-bound world of Carnatic, daring to make original creations, no one contributed as much as him to its passage beyond conventional audiences with crossover jugalbandis alongside Hindustani masters.

BCCL

Vidwaan Mandolin U. Srinivas

(1969-2014)

The child prodigy fulfilled his own promise before departing, too early, at age 45—a self-hewn virtuoso who became so synonymous with an instrument that it adorned his name. That too a western one with a primarily folk footprint. How Srinivas eked out the gamaka-laden melodic complexities of Carnatic from his mandolin—and made it sound so haunting and magical—is a marvel of nature.

Ustad Alla Rakha

(1919-2000)

The waxing and waning of his tala in sync with Pt Ravi Shankar's raga showers at festivals like Monterey Pop, Woodstock and Concert for Bangladesh are part of global music lore, giving the tabla an aura that will never dim. Judge only by Grateful Dead drummer Mickey Hart's words: "Ustad Alla Rakha is the Einstein, the Picasso; he is the highest form of rhythmic development on this planet."

By **ASHISH MOHAN KHOKAR**

India's top dance historian and Curator, MKDC@IGNCA

The Dashavatara of Dance

While the aesthetic core of Indian classical dance has evolved over at least two millennia, the past century has been critical in shaping the structure and substance of the various forms we know today. Who were those 10—the dashavatara—who helped redefine nritya? Whose dancing footsteps turned the very path of India's cultural history? India's ace dance critic-historian offers his selection, with documentary evidence from the famed Mohan Khokar Dance Collection (MKDC), now donated to the Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts (IGNCA).

Uday Shankar

(1900-1977)

For India, he is the father of what's today called contemporary dance. Uday Shankar is credited with creating a non-classical but Indian dance vocabulary as early as the 1930s—after a brief excursion to western forms during his stint with ballerina Anna Pavlova's troupe. He did not debunk classical forms but simplified dance languages that were dependent on regional or classical texts. He honed his style in the lap of the Himalayas—in Almora, to be precise—and trained many before shifting to Chennai to make *Kalpana* (1948), a dance-themed film shot over seven years. His final years were spent in Calcutta, where he produced his swansong: the multi-format *Shankarscope*. His style was carried forward by disciples Sachin Shankar, Narendra Sharma and Mamata Shankar.

GETTY IMAGES

T. Balasaraswati

(1918-1984)

Born to a hereditary Devadasi family, with vocalist Veena Dhanammal as matriarch, T. Balasaraswati was the last spokesperson of the temple form—codified as a court style in Tanjore (the 'T' in her name). Her family had a whole gallery of top-notch musicians, and her style too was especially attuned to music. Shunned initially by Madras's caste-ridden sabhas, she was helped by lawyer-activist E. Krishna Iyer, The Music Academy head V. Raghavan, and then SNA head Mohan Khokar. In the US, the Scripps family were her patrons. Once the West feted her, and she regaled audiences from Japan to London, India followed. But her Bharatanatyam 'bani' ended with her.

GETTY IMAGES

Ram Gopal

(1912–2003)

Ram Gopal of Bangalore—half-Burmese, half-Rajput by lineage—helped put India's classical forms on the world map starting in the 1940s, through the 1960s. What Uday Shankar did for contemporary Indian dance, Ram Gopal did for classical. He learnt three forms—and once said, 'My left side is Bharatanatyam and the right side is Kathakali, in my legs lies Kathak.' Equipped with this trilingual flair, he created montages that made him look like a god dancing on stage. He was born to dance, and although he didn't leave many students, he mentored many. He left India for the UK in the 1960s.

Rukmini Devi Arundale

(1904 -1986)

She helped institutionalise Bharatanatyam. Even as the Anti-Nautch Movement was leading up to the abolition of the Devadasi system in 1947, Rukmini Devi was almost single-handedly giving the old Sadir dance a new, sanctified status in society—with a new name and ethos. Thanks to her connections at home and abroad—"married" too as she was to the Theosophical Society, which was full of foreigners doing social reform in India in the 1930s—she went on to merge the discipline of the West with the knowledge systems of the East, South India to be specific. She was uniquely positioned in history as India was headed towards a fight for freedom, and she became a cause celebre in dance, rescuing it from forced extinction by elaborating the temple style, de-eroticising it to stave off colonial-era stigmas. She was helped by the Theosophical Society to create a space for dance—Kalakshetra—but later, the very same society delinked itself from dance, calling it an 'antithesis' to their stated goals. Arundale showed her acumen by buying beach plots on the outskirts of Madras and combining these to build an entirely new institution. Today, Kalakshetra, as a school of Bharatanatyam and Carnatic, is the "Bolshoi of India". In 1977, Arundale was the preferred choice to be President, but she declined.

Yamini Krishnamurthy

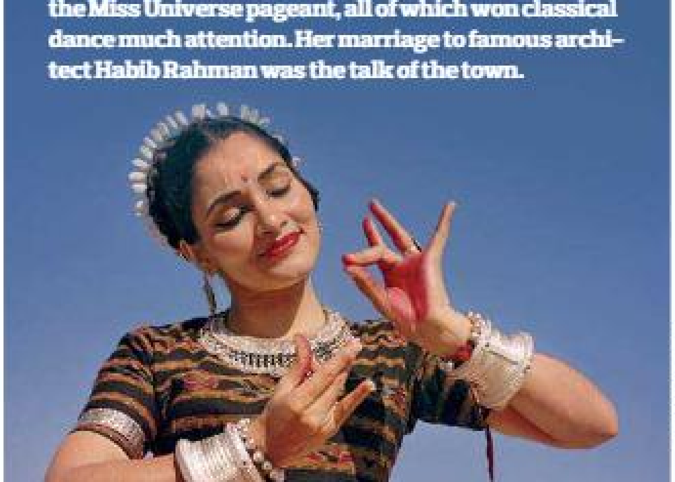
(1940–)

Even when not giving electrifying performances, Yamini Krishnamurthy lit up the stage with her thousand-watt presence. Trained in three principal styles, Bharatanatyam, Kuchipudi and Odissi, she did her alma mater, Kalakshetra, proud by excelling in all. In fact, her decision to learn Odissi from Adiguru Pankaj Charan Das goaded others like Ritha Devi to follow suit. A beacon of the classical arts, no state function in Delhi was complete without her dance presentation. Heads of state waited to get photographed with her. Yamini was India's first prima donna, prima ballerina, prima everything; diva and superstar, all rolled into one. Her elaborate eye make-up is still a trend, as are her mannerisms and pout, very handy in this age of selfies.

Indrani Rahman

(1930-1999)

If Indian dance had one global icon, performing before everyone from Kennedy to Khrushchev and teaching at the Julliard, it was Indrani. Her steps straddled East and West with all the grace of Odissi. And she gave that dance-form a national profile at a time when it was not recognised officially, and would-be icons like Mayadhar Raut and Sanjukta Panigrahi were learning Bharatanatyam at Kalakshetra. Born to American pioneer Ragini Devi and freedom fighter Ramalal Bajpai, Indrani was crowned Miss India in 1952 and was also the first Indian woman to participate in the Miss Universe pageant, all of which won classical dance much attention. Her marriage to famous architect Habib Rahman was the talk of the town.



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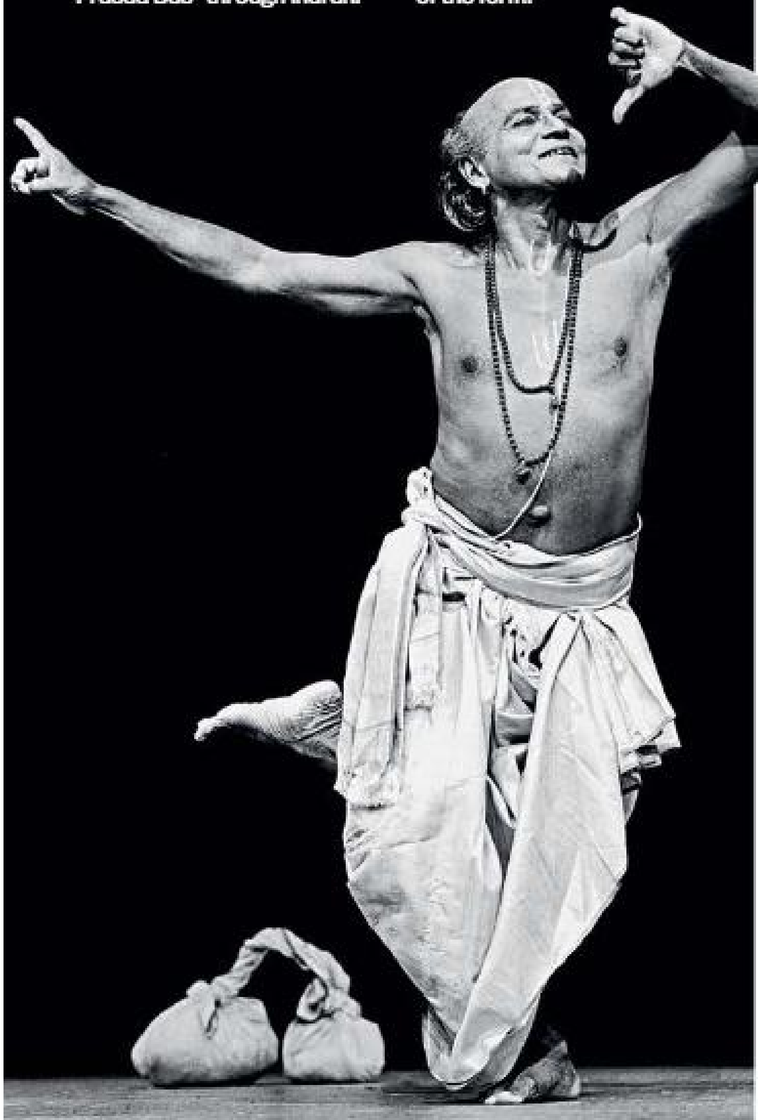
Kelucharan Mohapatra

(1926 -2004)

Born to pattachitra painters of Raghurajpur, Kelubabu, as he was known, made Odissi famous globally, along with his students Minati Das, Sanjukta Panigrahi, Madhavi Mudgal, Protima Bedi and more. He started off as an assistant at Annapurna theatre company, but once Odissi as a form was established, thanks to critics Charles Fabri and Mohan Khokar, he rode the wave in the 1980s and never looked back. Before him, Deba Prasad Das—through Indrani Rahman, Pankaj Charan Das, Yamini Krishnamurthy et al—had made Odissi popular in the 1960s. But once Kelubabu's disciples came of age, they brought him centrestage and he became a benchmark in himself. His mastery over music helped him create works of ever-lasting value. And though he resumed dancing in old age, he looked like a youth icon. His son and successor Ratikant has inherited his craft, while Ratikant's wife Sujata is the current star of the form.



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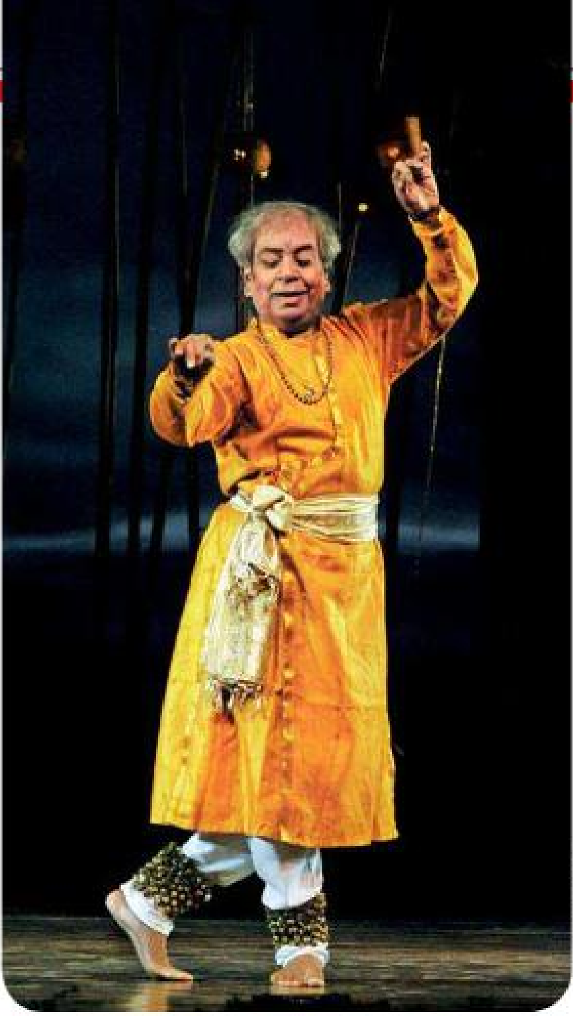

BANDEEP SINGH

Birju Maharaj

(1938 -2022)

He was first a prince of the Lucknow gharana, then the king of Kathak. He was Krishna, the ultimate romantic hero of Indian dance. Forever young, there was nothing light about his art—except when his eyes enacted the coquetry of the gods. A master of rhythm, scale, music and choreography, he was a complete artiste. He started off young in the court of Nawab of Rampur, then moved to Delhi with his father Achchan Maharaj and uncle Shambhu, and at the age of 13, he started teaching at Sangeet Bharati. His students are many: Bharati Gupta, Brojen Mukherjee, Shovana Narayan, Saswati Sen, Aditi Mangaldas, and then some. He trained three generations and more at the Kathak Kendra in Delhi, and at his private school Kala Ashram. His gifted children continue his work. Brij Mohan Mishra, popular as Birju Maharaj, teamed up with many leading dancers of his time, such as Sitara Devi, Kumudini Lakhia, Indrani Rahman, M.K. Saroja and, recently, Padma Subrahmanyam. His biggest contribution is choreography for dance dramas, which helped Kathak become a part of Bollywood culture, in a meaningful way.

Padma Subrahmanyam

(1943–)

Born to a family of filmmakers, musicians and artists, Padma was a natural. She, however, had an academic mind and did seminal research in dance and South Indian temple sculptures and learnt about *karanas*, which she made her lifetime work. She created her own style, Padma Natyam, based on the *karanas*—practically making Bharatanatyam leap out from temple walls to the stage. The films made by her illustrious father, director K. Subramanyam, also helped give a mass appeal to the dance form. Thus marrying theory with practice, Padma extends the aesthetic universe envisaged in the *Natyashastra* of Bharatamuni, whose cause she espouses. One of the foremost dance academics in India, she has crafted a memorial for Bharatamuni and Ilango at Pattipulam village near Chennai, where she has recreated a gallery of the 108 *karanas*. Her own niece, Mahati, is a delight to watch too.

BCCL

Sonal Mansingh

(1944–)

Smart, educated, city-bred and born to power, Sonal Pakvasa nee Mansingh, has carved a special place for herself in the Indian dance pantheon, and became the first dancer to be nominated to Parliament. She is well-versed in two dance forms, Bharatanatyam and Odissi. She is well-read, too, with lateral knowledge and worldwide exposure—a sharp mind with an equally sharp memory. She blends spunk with substance, ability with authority. She is a woman who knows how to rule a man's world. Babus are afraid of her temper, and netas dance to her tunes. If Indian dance can be thought of as a journey that started way back in 1947, she is its current pole star.

INDIA PICTURE

Water And Shark®

AN INDIAN SHARK DOMINATING THE GLOBAL WATERS

The credibility of business comes not from its fanciful creations but the wisdom and reverence of its leaders. One such leader is the momentous magnate - Harsh Patel.

Water and Shark is a decade-old financial and legal advisory firm ferried by a team of excellent CAs and lawyers. With a bouquet of service offerings and a presence across several nations - UAE, Singapore, US, and Qatar - the firm has amassed sizeable traction and respect in the business industry.

And while the team behind this feat is exceptional in every way, no company can grow to such heights without the guidance of a strong-willed CEO. Sitting at the helm of the firm, Harsh Patel is the quintessential leader of W&S Global. An International Corporate Lawyer and a qualified Chartered Accountant, Mr. Patel has been running the show ever since he founded the company at age 19. In the last ten years, the boy from a humble origin in Mumbai has left no stone unturned. He and his team, with their strong command in the financial and legal domain, have bolstered the loyalty of their clients, earned them unquestioned trust of their promoters, and rendered their services irreplaceable. Harsh's acumen for business, his industriousness and foresight helped him chaperone the company to newer heights when the pandemic was playing havoc in the world of business.

> HARSH PATEL

Today, as the world reels from the market impacts of the pandemic and takes on newer issues of climate change, sustainability and metaversal realities, it needs entrepreneurs like Harsh. Business is not as usual. There is an increasing focus on ESG, virtual workspaces and services, healthcare, inclusivity, and data privacy in the business world. These Neo-terms are also bringing a lot of ethical and morality arguments into the purview. Big Tech is already under the ire of world governments for exploiting resources and selling consumer data.

Modern businesses, especially startups want to steer clear of this exploitative abyss. For this, Harsh realizes that clients are going to need more than just advice and assurance. They need to understand the processes, they need to know how their business and its partnerships and structures affect the world around them. They need to be assured of their moral axis in the industry. They want a company that can navigate the legalities of running a business in this modern, woke, AI/VR driven era.

With that token, Harsh decided to take up a new challenge. For someone who's practiced accountancy for over a decade, adding legal experience and knowledge to the mix has enabled him to become the 'Go to' consultant for all financial and legal matters across borders.

He has picked up the legal mantle to help clients structure their businesses to be more sustainable and inclusive and embrace virtual spaces. He wants to work with businesses to create privacy-first, GDPR-compliant, carbon neutral products.

"It s not just about servicing clients in the present, but also being adaptive and innovative in the future. If the future is AI, then our services will also be AI." says **Harsh.**

This electric mix of modernity, ethics and ambition is what makes W&S so special to the business world.

Harsh has a lot of accolades to his name. The Acharya Abhinav Gupt Award by the Governor of West Bengal, The Pride of Maharashtra Award and the Finnext Award in the "Excellence in Finance" category, presented in Dubai, the Youth Leaders of Change Award 2021 — to name a few. He has also featured in Forbes India Magazine Top 100 Peoples Manager and was most recently recognized as "UAE's Most Influential Financial and Legal Professional" as well as was honored with an award at the "LAW 2.0" Conference held in Dubai. **But the most enriching part of his story is the fact that he is bringing the Indian expertise to the world. He's the Indian Shark ruling global waters.**

SUPRIYA LIFESCIENCE LTD.
AN INDIAN STAR IN THE PHARMA SKIES

A passion for excellence and the dedication to keep refining the standards surely takes one to the top. Recognitions and rewards apart, it results in a greater demand for your products. Dr. Satish Wagh has followed these simple yet profound principles to create a company whose products are the toast of the pharma world.

DR. SATISH WAGH

Incorporated in 1987 as Supriya Chemicals, the brain child of the unassuming Dr. Satish Wagh is a INR 500 Crore plus company. He founded Supriya Chemicals with the express intention of setting standards in conducting businesses ethically and to provide employment opportunities to the deserving. A degree holder in Chemistry, he furthered his strong grasp of technology with a Degree in Economics, to help him understand business better. Armed with the perfect blend of subject knowledge and business acumen, he has built an edifice of excellence in the field of Active Pharmaceutical Ingredients.

With a strong focus on quality and excellence, every year was a landmark, launching new products and setting new paradigms. With an impressive portfolio of over 40 API's that meet the exacting standards of over 2000 global clients, Dr. Wagh has put Maharashtra and India in the Pharmaceutical World Map. His ethical, uncompromising approach to quality ensured that the company's product has won the implicit trust of health authorities in USA, Europe, Japan, Latin America, Canada, Australia, China, etc.

A preferred partner to companies in more than 120 countries, Supriya Chemicals transformed to Supriya Lifescience Ltd., emerging as the largest producer of Anti-histamines in the world. In the year 2004, it became the world's largest manufacturer of Chlorpheniramine Maleate. In 2006, it was ranked as the world's second largest manufacturer of Vitamin B2 5 Phosphate Sodium. In 2009, it started production of Ketamine HCL and soon became the world's largest producer.

In keeping with its growing product mix, the company went public in 2008. With skyrocketing demand for their products, Dr. Wagh is aiming to make Supriya Lifescience Ltd. a INR1000 Crore entity in the next 5 years. His clear vision and impeccable articulation have earned this first generation entrepreneur a lot of respect. A widely travelled technocrat who has demonstrated his success in the global markets, he commands the admiration and esteem of his industry colleagues and peers.

He was elected Chairman of CHEMEXIL, the Chemical Export Promotion Council, Ministry Of Commerce & Industry, Government Of India in 1994 when total exports were a mere USD 17 billion.His achievements at CHEMEXCIL have been legendary. He was instrumental in getting the association appointed as a nodal agency for 'REACH Regulation'. He helped the 4800 member exporters to get a toe-hold into EU countries. He also worked to ensure the reimbursement of 50% of ECHA registration fees to the Chemical exporters, a facility extended only to Pharma companies. His rigorous efforts helped instituting a 'Product Registration' for Agro Chemicals. He also pioneered a Chemical Inventory Program that helps track the chemical inventory from beginning to end and addresses all of the special issues associated with storing, using, and disposing of hazardous materials.

As he completed his 6th term (22 years), exports were valued at over USD 47 billion. He is also the Chairman of CETP (Lote Parshuram), where Supriya Lifescience Ltd's first manufacturing unit is located.

Mr. Wagh is the recipient of numerous awards and accolades including the prestigious National Award for "Best Entrepreneur" (2007). He was featured in the Forbes Powerful Performers list of 2021 & Economic times most influential leaders of 2022. The Hon. Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau has sent him a Certificate of Appreciation that was handed to him by Hon'ble Industry Minister Shri. Subhashji Desai.

He inspires young entrepreneurs and business school graduates as Guest Lecturer at several prestigious institutions like IIM, Ahmedabad, Symbiosis International University, Pune, IIFT, Delhi on subjects related to business and entrepreneurship.

As a man who is socially responsible, he has supported the building of schools, colleges and auditoriums with substantial donations. He has also helped several hospitals in Ratnagiri by donating Wheel-Chairs, medicines, masks, sanitizers during the Covid-19 outbreak

NEHHA KANDHARI & THE COLORS OF HEALING CANVAS

Nehha Kandhari was destined to change lives. A deeply spiritual person, she recognizes the intelligence that connects all and shapes the world. She harnesses the powers within her to create a positive canvas that liberates people from troubles.

Nehha Kandhari wears multiple hats. She is the CEO of Vinfab Engineers India Private Limited, a NCFM certified professional, a Vastu Shastra Expert, a business woman and a mother of two.

Born in a Punjabi family in Agra, young Nehha discovered the concept of Vastu thanks to her parents' deep faith in this ancient Vedic science. Representing the human body as five elements–fire, earth, water, air, and sky, Vastu Shastra propounds that when these five are positioned appropriately in a home, they will unleash immense health, wealth, prosperity and happiness in the household. "Vastu Shastra is a science of architecture and design. It enhances positive energies by eliminating the negative ones from every direction of the house or office," she states.

Nehha was fascinated enough to learn this science. Armed with an in-depth knowledge of Vastu Shastra, she learnt and practiced healing, Reiki and FengShui, to understand the subtleties of energy and develop a holistic approach.

Moving to Mumbai post marriage, Nehha joined the family business. The lockdown allowed her to devote time to painting, a passionate hobby. Bringing her spiritual knowledge into play, she created works of art that goes beyond looking good. They usher in positivity, to change the destinies of their owners.

As per Hinduism, the knowledge that a soul accumulates over a lifetime is not lost. One needs to know how to tap it. With her psychic powers, Nehha picks it up and then shapes a solution for it. "To make a Vastu Compliant painting, I approach the whole process as a long deep meditation imbibing focus and positivity with every stroke of colour", she says.

As the pioneer in **Vastu Compliant Paintings** that heals, Nehha's command on the subject and her domain expertise is stupendous. She says assuringly," If one pays attention to small or major changes which take place after we place a painting at home, one can realize that each painting creates its own effect. The endeavour should be to enhance the positive impact with appropriate figures, colours, images in the painting which are suitable for the space as well as the direction in which the artwork is placed."

Nehha has been commissioned for a slew of projects that will keep her busy for months together. Appreciations have also led to awards and recognitions. She was felicitated by the Governor of Maharashtra for Iconic Woman in Arts and Creativity 2022. She was felicitated by Chief Minister of Gujrat, Shri Bhoopendra Patel with Bharat Shikkhar Samman, 2022 and Times Most Influential Leader 2022 for Culture and Art.

TESTIMONIALS

"I wanted to share that the 'Vastu'- compliant painting has really made a big impact in our relationships and finances. We feel so lucky and blessed to have your paintings as a part of this eternal journey of our life. Thanks for making this a better place for us as we all truly feel the energy in your paintings and the divine soul you are."

"For the past 12 years I have had Anxiety Disorder, manifesting itself as panic attacks, insomnia.... With all this, my life was never easy. After installing your painting in my home, I have felt more calm and composed. I sleep peacefully without any distraction at night. Even at work, my performance has improved. I would like to thank you I one sentence: 'A Blissful Soul with a Magic Brush in Her Hands'."

"I've bought Nehha Kandhari's paintings for our two projects. I am incredibly happy with the results. She has recommended paintings as per the direction and it has brought a lot of positive vibes in our home and work place. I live in a joint family and have partnership business too.

There is so much harmony at home and work place now. I am somewhere convinced that we are now getting good growth opportunities too. I want to buy her paintings in future and recommend them to my friends. Wish you all the success, stay blessed Nehha Ji."

SWAGAT HOSPITALS - SETTING STANDARDS IN SURGICAL EXCELLENCE

SWAGAT
SUPER SPECIALITY SURGICAL INSTITUTE

When a person decides that his people should have access to the best of healthcare facilities at their doorsteps, there is nothing stopping them. Moving heaven and earth, they would realise their dreams of creating a magnificent edifice that stands testimony to their vision, commitment and dedication.

> PROF. SUBHASH KHANNA

Swagat Super Speciality Surgical Institute (SSSSI) is the brainchild of the illustrious Dr. Subhash Khanna. Strategically located at Guwahati, with easy access to the railway station and the airport, the institute is emerging as the healthcare central for the entire North East. Offering cutting edge solutions at par with the best worldwide, they offer succor to patients in the region at a fraction of the cost of what it might take in the main metros like Kolkata, New Delhi or Mumbai.

Dr. Subhash Khanna is a pioneering veteran in the field of laproscopic interventions. A former professor of surgery at the Guwahati Medical College, he has more than 20000 endoparascopic surgeries to his credit. He has undergone advanced Laparoscopic training in Scotland and Vienna. He has over 200 publications and scientific presentations to his credit.

His contributions have been immense in the development of Minimal Access Surgery in Assam and India. He has been an evangelist since it's infancy, foreseeing the potential that laproscopy has to improve healthcare. It has been his enthusiasm, that has made this patient-friendly surgery available to the rural masses through his trained surgeons. His inputs have gone into crafting the Guidelines of Minimal Invasive Surgery, laid down as mandatory by the Ministry of Health, Government of India and the Medical Council of India.

With such impeccable credentials, one can expect nothing but the best from Dr. Khanna. That is exactly what SSSSI delivers.

Gathering a team of talented, experienced medical professional who share his passion, Dr. Khanna has created an institution of trust. Like its founder, the hospital has been a pioneer in the region to bring in minimal invasive therapeutic endoscopy and robotic surgery. With the advent of newer endoscopic techniques, they have extended their expertise to resolve health issues that range from thyroid, breast, fistula, weightloss, gall bladder, appendicitis and hernia.

The institute has a dedicated gastro intestinal centre to address issues related to the entire digestive system. That apart, it also has, one of its kind advanced interventional cardiology department and critical care unit.

Dr. Khanna has ushered in a medical revolution by introducing robotic surgeries at the centre. Equipped with the ultra modern Versius Robot, SSSSI offers cutting edge solutions that are world class.

It is to Dr. Khanna's credit that he has managed to bring the best of healthcare facilities to the north east, yet offer it to his people at a fraction of the cost it might take in the major metros of India. Top notch technology, trustworthy treatment and proximity have ensured to make SSSSI that healthcare destination of first choice of the people in the North East, Nepal, Bhutan and Bangladesh. This speaks volumes of his foresight and humane nature.

Dr. Khanna's commitment and dedication to the cause has been well appreciated. He was selected for the prestigious "Dr B. C. Roy Award" in the "Eminent Teacher" category, for his extensive contribution to the development of healthcare and medical education in the region. He is the recipient of the prestigious Fellowship of Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh, which he recieved in February, 2020.

Assisted ably by Prof. Dr. Swagata Khanna, Dr. Ayushman Khanna and his dedicated team, Dr. Khanna is ensuring that no one in that region suffers for the lack of proper medical treatment. His vision is changing the paradigm for the region and the nation. In this regards, this trailblazer is indeed an inspiration.

We would welcome more such initiatives.

CHANDNI KAPADIA
ONE WOMAN, MULTIPLE FACETS

It is fashionable to write about the hardships and the odds that one overcomes to succeed in life. Chandni Kapadia's interesting career graph can only be attributed to her zest for life. Call it her Joie de Vivre.

Right from venturing out to foreign lands as a teenager to seeking experience and learning fashion, her life has been an eventful journey full of new challenges, exciting opportunities packed with learning's that guided her to new empowering roles. From being the Asia Pacific Head or Country head for various luxury brands to being their consultant or being an Executive Director at a University or National Head for WICCI Design Council, she has done it all. She is also associated with education and law since more than a decade. And all of this is guided by a simple formula,"When the going gets tough, put one foot in front of the other and just keep going."

Chandni's evolution into an acknowledged game-changer started with her rejecting homogeneity to be different from others and carve an identity for herself. Since that day, she decided she would be her own Boss!! She says *"I crave for challenges that excite me and which give me a sense of satisfaction of having done something good".* And the toughest challenge for her as a leader and an entrepreneur, she says, has been being a woman. She says, *"There are bound to be times when one tends to feel low or not at their best."* But she has always looked in the face of these challenges and criticisms and faced them head on as these are the times when a person must believe in oneself and tread cautiously as these are the times when one can make bad decisions.

Over the years, she has successfully transformed herself into a brand. Popularly known as CK, Chandni is a firm believer in the manifestation of one's dreams. CK transformed her dreams to reality, working for Calvin Klein and Accessorize, brands she had always dreamt to work for, while she was a fashion student at NY. Today, when she looks back at her journey from working for a company to being a consultant of these companies, she says *"There is nothing that I probably wouldn't do again. However, there are things that I would do in a different way."*

CK has been recognized globally for her work & contribution towards entrepreneurship, fashion and education with numerous awards like World Women Leadership Congress Award, Black Swan Award for Women Empowerment, Leaders of Change award and acknowledged by top magazines like Economic Times, Outlook, Forbes, Business Today and Fortune India to her credit.

She says *"Today I am at a stage of my career where I want to work more for women and with women".* Chandni support women led teams consist of women as they are bound to put their best in their jobs and at the same time are kind and hardworking who always support each other's dreams and voices.

Chandni feels fortunate to have met many people who believe and support similar causes on empowering people especially women around her which led her to work towards many organizations like WICCI India, Rotary and other NGOs. CK quips *"It has required a lot of gut, sheer dedication and will for the life I have today, and I would have had it no other way; So for any young mind who seeks to succeed in life, there is no alternative to working hard with dedication and standing your ground and success will gradually follow."*

CK stands out as an inspiration to all, not only women. She has walked the talk to prove that passion can see us through the toughest terrain to guide us to a life that we truly seek and deserve.

> CHANDNI KAPADIA

To succeed professionally, one tends to look for a career in a field they love. There are a few exceptionally talented people who shine in multiple fields. Chandni Kapadia stands out with a remarkable career that spans a spectrum of industries that are as different as chalk and cheese.

Narendra Firodia

TRANSFORMING AHMEDNAGAR WITH LOVE & DEDICATION

This Entrepreneur has been going all out to develop Ahmednagar and influence its people to dream big and achieve success. A true leader, he has successfully assembled a team of like-minded people who now reshape the goals of youngsters and the people, at large.

> NARENDRA FIRODIA

Narendra transmits his love for Nagar to people who come in contact with him, influencing them to join him. His vision is reshaping Ahmednagar (Maharashtra), giving its people more grounds for pride, filling them with self-belief. Youngsters are motivated to excel and make a mark at the national level.

Narendra's philanthropic Shantikumarji Firodia Memorial Foundation, named after his illustrious father, works to improve healthcare infrastructure and primary education. The organization also rehabilitates abandoned women and children, contributes to rural development and the preservation of Indian art and culture.

Narendra has founded a host of online platforms like LetsUPP, a hyperlocal infotainment mobile app and 1OTT, Bharat's OTT platform. His pride is the "I Love Nagar" digital platform for the people of Nagar. With a team spread across every nook and corner of the taluka, it offers the most detailed local coverage. It is the only platform that gives the complete news of Nagar.

"As a website and an app, I Love Nagar" transcends being a news portal to become a dependable bulwark for Nagar, when needed. During the pandemic. Narendra's team offered succor to the helpless, feeding them and providing comfort. His teams fed nearly 50,000 people, apart from stray dogs and other animals. Food packets and groceries were also distributed. "Mission Raahat" initiated by Snehalaya and supported by the Shantikumarji Firodia Trust and 'I Love Nagar' was a pillar of strength to migrant labourers, restoring the hope of more than 3,50,000 families.

Isolation beds were donated to hospitals, the police headquarters and even the prison. Narendra's Ahmednagar First donated to procure medical essentials during the pandemic: 4,000 PPE kits, 10,000 N95 masks, 20,000 3-layered masks, 2,000 sanitisers, 2,000 face shields, ventilators for hospitals and IR thermometers for public places. He proclaims, "We have always strived to reach out to the ones in need and will continue to do so in the coming days."

"I Love Nagar" always swings to support Nagar-ites. A mother-son duo stuck at Pune post-surgery, was safely brought back home. A one and half year old child of daily wage earners with intense burns on his body was rushed to the Ahmednagar Burn Centre and treated gratis.

The Maximus Sports Academy is another initiative of 'I Love Nagar'. MSA has tied up with top sports institutes to offer the best training facilities for sportspersons. Narendra states, "We are open to collaborations to provide what it takes for the players to represent Bharat at the international level." MSA's alumni include India's youngest grandmaster Shardul Gagare and national wrestlers from the rural parts of Ahmednagar.

The Spirit of Armour Park adjacent to Bhuikot Fort is another offering from "I Love Nagar". A fitting monument commemorating India's victory over Pakistan in 1971, the Park is a testament to Ahmednagar evolving from a military town to be the embodiment of the intrinsic values of Bharat!

Narendra's endeavors have won him many awards. He was the recipient of "Times Man of the Year 2020" for philanthropy. He was Forbes "Icon of Excellence" in 2021. Interactive Forum of Indian Economy called him a "Champion of Change in Maharashtra" in 2020. The New York Press Agency named him in"500 most influential people in India" in 2020.

DR. MANJULA POOJA SHROFF

REWRITING THE DNA OF EDUCATION

The Gujarat based Kalorex Group are reimagining education to nurture youngsters who are dexterous enough to adapt and succeed in any situation. It is focussed on moulding youngsters who are eager and confident to occupy their place in the global order. Dr. Shroff is creating a nimble organization that is constantly tweaking itself to offer contemporary education, that will empower it Is students to rise up to the challenges of the future.

The Kalorex Group consists of the Delhi Public Schools, Calorx Olive International School at Ahmedabad and Calorx Public Schools across Western India. As the MD & CEO, Dr. Pooja Manjula Shroff has built a colossal network of 40+ institutions of educational excellence that extend from Pre-Schools to K-12 schools, e-Learning, Edutainment and Special Focus Institutions. Today, Kalorex is recognized as a quality-conscious group with a focus on Innovation and the use of Technology in Learning. She even offers consultancy to other educational institutions that would like to upgrade themselves to the high standards set by Kalorex.

Dr. Shroff is more than just an educationalist. She is a catalyst who is transforming generations of young Indians. Enthusing them to identify their true potential and live up to it, she is instilling ambitious aspirations in youngsters and encouraging them to dare and win. She believes in being the person who opens the doors of the universe and empowers them to go and make the most of the opportunities that it has for them.

With her experience and grasp on student psychology, Dr. Shroff is consciously building an ecosystem that crafts the overall personality of the students, striving to hone their overall development in all areas. The Kalorex impact starts at the Pre-School stage itself. Their research based curriculum, in partnership with the parents, develops the skills of children, laying a strong foundation for their holistic development. Their Early Childhood Foundation Stage - ECFS, is a blend of the British Curriculum with a healthy dose of Finnish Education Methodology. The curriculum is customized to suit Indian Students. As Dr. Shroff says, "We have successfully infused innovations in the curriculum to bring in 21 Century skills, offering a balanced blend of Global & Local learning, making our system truly 'Glocal'.

Dr. Shroff takes great pride in the fact that their system unfetters young children and prods them to open their minds to the world. She lucidly explains child psychology and how they learn. She says, "Children are naturally inquisitive and ask a lot of questions. As they seek answers, it leads to them getting engaged with the topic at hand. This in turn leads them to explore and seek more information. The need to explore leads them to experiment and try their hands in the activity. This exploration and simultaneous experimentation leads to experience. Experience remains etched in their minds. This is the best form of teaching and learning".

A humanitarian at heart, Dr. Shroff firmly believes that education is the biggest tool to empower oneself. Under her guidance, Kalorex started a Parentage Home called Visamo Kids Foundation in 2001. The foundation selects the brightest children from underprivileged backgrounds and supports them with the best shelter, food and nutrition and education until they graduate high school. Kalorex even provides them with financial assistance to pursue higher Education and to stand up for themselves in life.

Prerna is another project that is a testimony to Dr. Shroff's efforts to make education a tool to create an inclusive society. This special school for dyslexics brings in cutting edge teaching practices to an understanding, nurturing environment, enabling and empowering the challenged students to claim their rightful place in society.

Dr. Shroff's untiring efforts to create a new, amalgamated, egalitarian world for the next generation has been applauded and acknowledged by the highest of the land. Chronicling the achievements of Dr. Shroff in her book **Success, Mantras** and **Musings**, Anurita Rathore Jadeja, a senior journalist and media professional, speaks of Dr. Shroff's innate belief in oneself, her art of staying focused, and trusting one's instincts with which she has shaped her own destiny.

Her role as an agent of positive change has been appreciated at several prestigious forums with awards. She is the recipient of the prestigious Secular India Award from the President of India, Shri Shankar Dayal Sharma & Woman of the year by American Bibliography Society, North Carolina.

Dr. Shroff is laying the foundations of a new India. She is a nation builder with a vision that transcends the immediate.

ARYEN SURESH KUTE

THE EPITOME OF BRILLIANCE

Every generation has had its share of successful young entrepreneurs. Amongst them, the prodigies start quite early to reveal their talent in a field of their choice. For some like Aryen Suresh Kute, entrepreneurship is the form of expression to stamp his mark on the world.

> ARYEN SURESH KUTE
FOUNDER AND CMD OF OAO INDIA

Aryen Suresh Kute, all of 14 and a 9th standard student, is the Founder and CMD of OAO INDIA. A wunderkind with a curious mind, he embarked on a journey and implemented an idea that a common school-going ten-year-old could think of.

From a young age, he was endowed with the insight and vision of a true entrepreneur.

Burning with curiosity and interest in learning new technologies related to games led Aryen to start a company in the field of Gaming and IT sector. That is how OAO INDIA came into existence. When he proposed his thoughts about starting a company—his parents, Mr. Suresh Dnyanobarao Kute (Chairman & Managing Director - The Kute Group) and Mrs. Archana Suresh Kute (Managing Director-The Kute Group)—influenced by his vision and idea, encouraged and supported him in this venture.

Today, as a young entrepreneur, Aryen is revolutionizing the gaming industry by leveraging his business acumen, innovative strategies, leadership skills, and most importantly, his passion for games. Under his exemplary leadership and guidance, OAO INDIA has released four games in a short period of time, accumulating a strong customer-base. This passion has helped him assemble and build a team of talented individuals who are equally passionate.

The four different genres of games are Krishna Makhan Masti (Puzzle Bubble Shooting Game), Indian Food Baash (Match-3 Food Puzzle Game), Rise of Warr (Strategic Card Game) and WarZone (Action-Packed Soldier Game). Plus, the company is all set to launch its newest game, SCHOOL TIME, an endless runner game, and are currently working on big projects: AAA multiplayer games, which are totally different from the previous games released globally by it. Users can also find OAO INDIA's games on multiple online app stores of prominent brands such as Samsung, Oppo, Vivo, Micromax, Google, and Apple.

Aryen has steered his team in the right direction, navigating the company skilfully through unprecedented challenges, and maintained a constant influx of revenue while focusing on the company's success and growth. As a result, today OAO INDIA is counted amongst the leading game development companies.

Aryen has become a role model for many young individuals, by his demonstration of how to balance school, extracurricular activities and business success.

In addition to being one of the successful young entrepreneurs, Aryen is also evolving as a philanthropist who believes in doing good deeds and making people happy, which is reflected in his company's values and functioning. He is also constantly striving to make a difference in society by participating in charitable initiatives through Kute Group Foundation.

It is not surprising that Aryen has been a recipient of many enviable awards. The milestones include - The Leader Behind an Admirable Company 2022 Award, "Best Leadership of the Year 2022" Award, 40 Under 40 Most Influential Leaders 2021-22, The Economic Times Most Influential Leaders 2022 Award, The Best Leadership Of The Year 2022 Award, Youth Icon in Gaming and Web development 2022, Sakal Yuva Sanman Award 2022, Lokshahi Pune Ratna 2021 Award, Most Innovative Younger Entrepreneur 2021, Globoil Youngest Achiever Of The Year 2021 and the Youngest Entreprenuer Award 2019.

In addition to prominent newspapers and television news channels, prestigious magazines such as Forbes India have recognised his achievements as well.

Rest assured, you are going to be reading more about this rising star, as he rises to conquer the universe with his prodigious talent, making the world a better place.

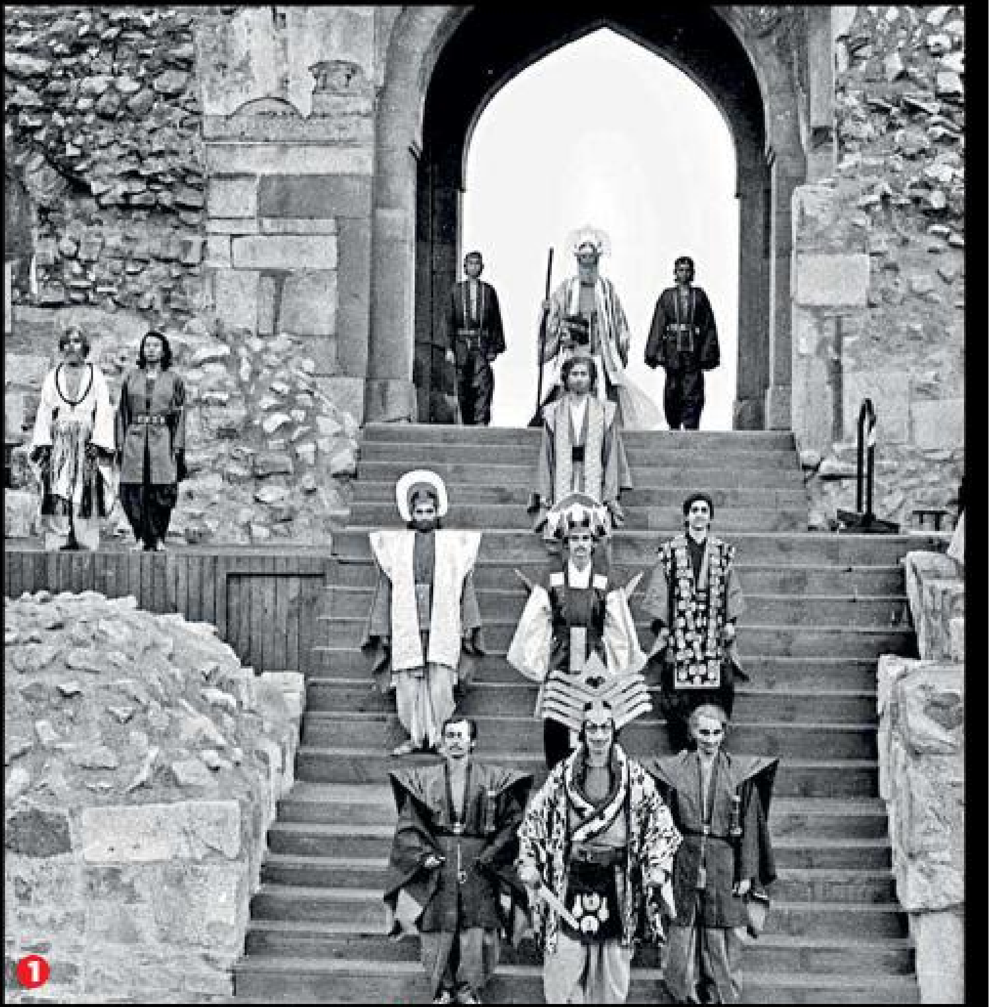

Image courtesy: THE ALKAZI THEATRE ARCHIVES

By **DEVENDRA RAJ ANKUR**

Former director, NSD

THEATRE OF THE SUBLIME

First a theatre of the roots, then a series of modernist subversions. The best of Indian theatre is, at its heart, a search for universals

(Scenes from)

1. Andha Yug *(Dharamveer Bharati, 1954)*

2. Ashadh Ka Ek Din *(Mohan Rakesh, 1958)*

It's a truly difficult task to choose the 10 best Indian plays from 75 years of India's independence. But since an attempt had to be made, I have tried to follow a certain logic. The following works, originally composed in one language, have all been translated and performed in various others over the years. That, I believe, should give us a reasonably reliable barometer of a play's success in communicating its thematic and dramaturgical universals—as long as we keep other essential criteria too in mind. Thus, if one were to compile a list of the most frequently performed Indian plays, these would certainly reign as the 10 most prominent among them.

We cannot even embark on this journey without mentioning Dharamveer

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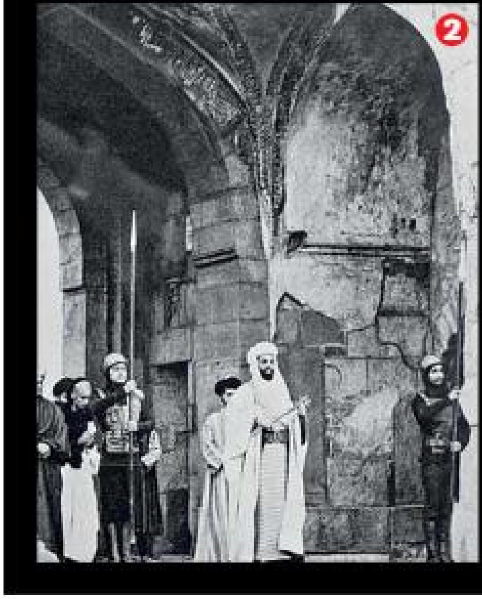
Image courtesy: THE ALKAZI THEATRE ARCHIVES



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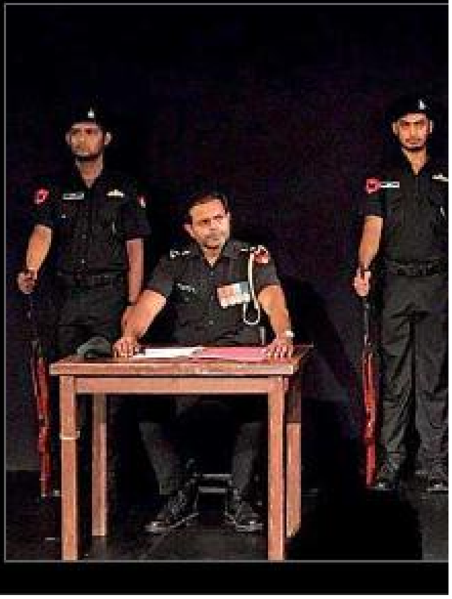


Bharti's dramatic verse ***Andha Yug*** (The Blind Age), based on the epic Mahabharata. Originally written as a radio drama, it was set against the backdrop of the Second World War and its horrors. Published in 1954, *Andha Yug* is a living document of post-war despair, frustration and disbelief directed against the Divine. Not a coincidence that Samuel Beckett's *Waiting for Godot*, originally written in French in that same post-war air of 1948-49, is based on a similar theme—while vastly different as a piece of theatre. One portrays the death of God, the other waits in despair for the Unknown, perhaps the Divine, who never arrives.

When discussing the eternal essence of storytelling, Mohan Rakesh's ***Ashadh Ka Ek Din*** (One Day in Ashadh), written and published in 1958, unfailingly comes to mind. For an artist, the choice between art and power is ever-present. That internal conflict has not been etched out more forcefully in contemporary theatre than through this play's protagonist, the poet Kalidas, his vital selfhood eviscerated in distant Ujjain, separated from his first love.

Rakesh's *Adhe Adhure* (Halfway House), written in 1969, may not have aged well. But the relevance of *Ashadh Ka Ek Din*, which Rakesh based on an interpretive reading of Kalidas's *Meghadootam* as revealing of the poet's own inner turmoil, will never dim...it's one of those pieces of art that's contemporary forever.

Girish Karnad's ***Tughlaq*** (1964) presents the tragedy of a quixotic but pragmatic ruler growing unsuccessful, and, ultimately, lonely. Written originally in Kannada, it was first performed in Hindustani, after which the whole language spectrum opened up—and has still not closed.

Leave aside historical characters. If one were to consider a contemporary character, one who in fact trawls its subconscious underground, perhaps nothing could better Vijay Tendulkar's 1972 Marathi play ***Sakharam Binder*** (Sakharam the Binder). For the first time in Indian theatre, a character emerges who's so utterly unabashed, fearless and limitless that society could not digest it. The play was banned, though the tedious legal case concluded with art emerging victorious. A 2020 rendition titled *Sex, Morality and Censorship* reprised this entire episode.

THOUGH THEY'RE VERY DIFFERENT, *ANDHA YUG* HAS A KINSHIP OF MOOD WITH *WAITING FOR GODOT*. THE SAME POST-WAR DESPAIR PERMEATES BOTH

Badal Sircar's 1963 Bangla play ***Ebong Indrajit*** (And Indrajit) will easily speak to audiences in the 21st century. Though it portrays the pain of the generation born around Independence that found itself adrift in a life of futility, trying to make some semblance of sense in life, doing

3

4

(Scenes from)

1. **Mahabhoj** *(Mannu Bhandari, 1982)*
2. **Tughlaq** *(Girish Karnad, 1964)*
3. **Charandas Chor** *(Habib Tanvir, 1975)*
4. **Court Martial** *(Swadesh Deepak, 1991)*

IT WAS ONLY AT THE END OF THE 20TH C. THAT THE DALIT QUESTION BEGAN TO INFORM THEATRE: *COURT MARTIAL* WAS ITS KEENEST POINT

things differently and continually encountering failure is one narrative that has not changed.

In the '70s and ' 80s, Indian theatre witnessed a turn in its core idiom and intent wherein attempts were made to satirise modern storytelling by using elements from the folk and classical theatrical repertoire. If one has to choose among them, Vijay Tendulkar's ***Ghasiram Kotwal*** (1972)—powerfully deploying the expressive toolkit of traditional stagecraft, right down to *abhangs* and *lavanis*, for its depiction of the amorality and corruption of power—makes a niche for itself.

Habib Tanvir's ***Charandas Chor*** (1975) did something similar. Originally composed in Chhattisgarhi, it is based on the story *Fitrati Chor* (Inherent Thief) by Rajasthani litterateur Vijaydan Detha. When the play was first performed with Chhattisgarhi artistes, speaking and singing in their own language, it capped Tanvir's long quest to dismantle the formal protocols of theatre in order to give it a new lease of life.

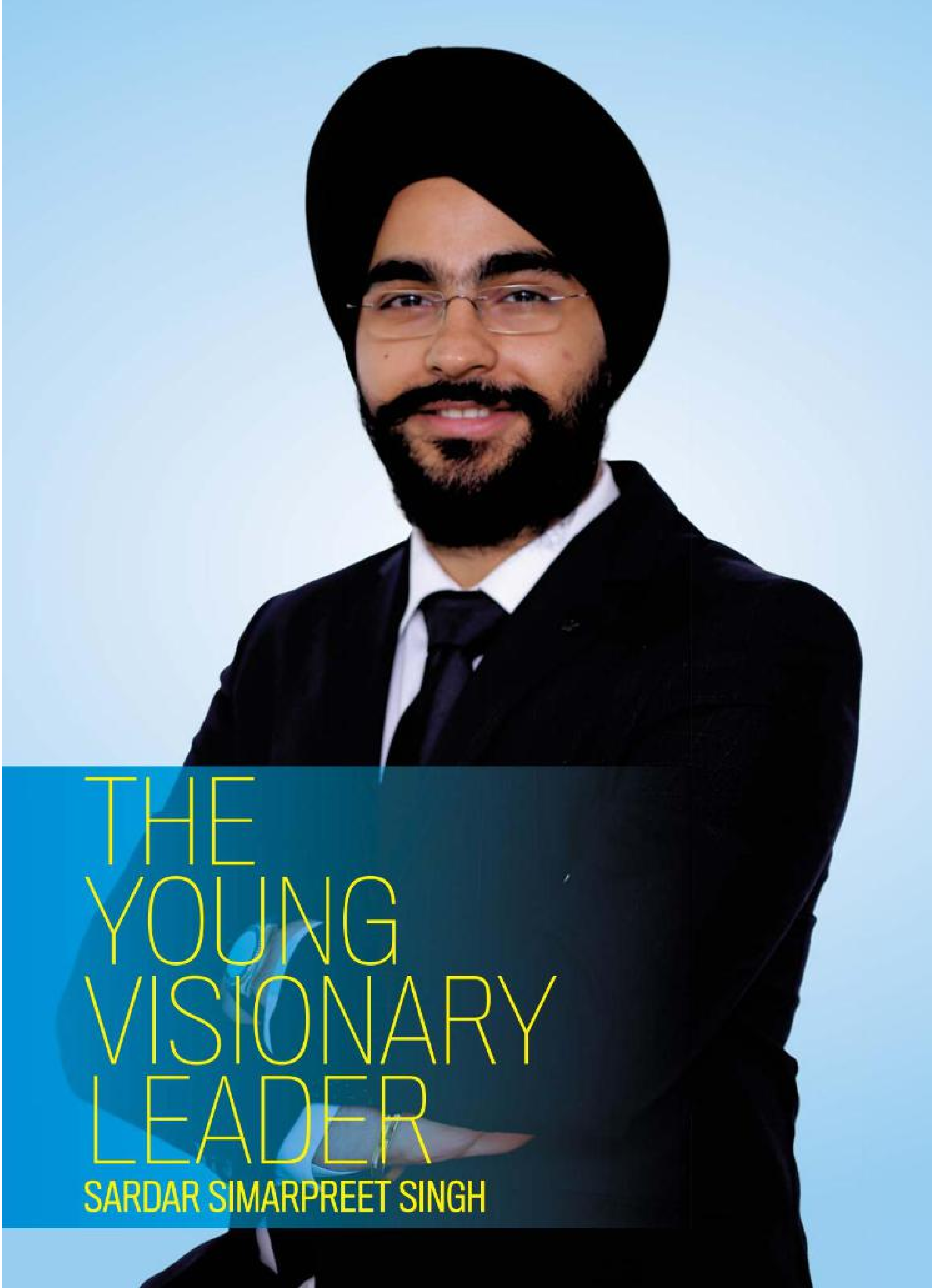
The last two decades of the 20th century will forever be remembered for three plays—Swadesh Deepak's ***Court Martial*** (1991), Mannu Bhandari's ***Mahabhoj*** (Great Banquet, 1982) and Asghar Wajahat's ***Jis Lahore Nai Dekhya O Jamyai Nai*** (One Who Has Not Seen Lahore Has Not Even Been Born, written in the 1980s). Though all three were written in Hindi/ Hindustani, their story, temperament and staging gave them a distinct and unique identity.

Uniquely, Mannu Bhandari first composed a novel with a political narrative, then adapted it for the theatre herself. Since its first staging in 1982, *Mahabhoj* has been performed several times. In fact, the theatrical version became so popular that people nearly forgot that Bhandari had initially written it as a novel. Needless to say, this play is living proof of the extent to which politics can go to fulfil its ulterior motives.

In 1989, Wajahat's *Jis Lahore Nai Dekhya O Jamyai Nai* got etched in theatre history overnight. The tragedy of Partition is a theme that emerges time and again in our literature and arts. Here, Mai's humane character exists almost as nature's defiance of binary political codes—no wonder the play has resonated with audiences in India and Pakistan alike, besides of course the diaspora.

It was only in the last decade of the 20th century that the Dalit question materialised in any appreciable form in Indian theatre. *Court Martial* was one of its sharpest expressions; it has not only grown in esteem and popularity since its first staging, but has remained in perpetual discussion. An interesting exercise, then, to sift through the archives and identify 10 landmarks; for it's clear history remembers only those works that remain relevant through the ages. ■

(This piece has been translated into English by Chandrali Mukherjee)



THE YOUNG VISIONARY LEADER

SARDAR SIMARPREET SINGH

Sardar Simarpreet Singh, the Director of JIS Group, a tricenarian leader and an indomitable spirit who believes in adapting business to modern needs and is dedicated to upbringing the standards of education for society's improvement.

To make learning more useful and interactive for current-generation learners, the use of technology in education today is a must, and so is the application of knowledge - keeping this in mind Sardar Simarpreet Singh, the young director, envisioned the growth of JIS Group as a priority to empower students with education and employment opportunities. He has constantly been a helping hand to his father.

Mr. Taranjit Singh (Managing Director, JIS Group), and the father-son duo has taken JIS Group to newer heights of glory. Presently, JIS Group Educational Initiatives has 37 institutes, 170 varied courses, and over 39000+ students enrolled in diverse academic programs.

Grandson of the late Sardar Jodh Singh, Founder of JIS Group, Sardar Simarpreet Singh strives to bring change in society. Growing up among such inspiring individuals, family values and principles were inculcated in him from early childhood. Staying true to these noble family values, he has been putting in constant efforts to pursue his late grandfather's dream.

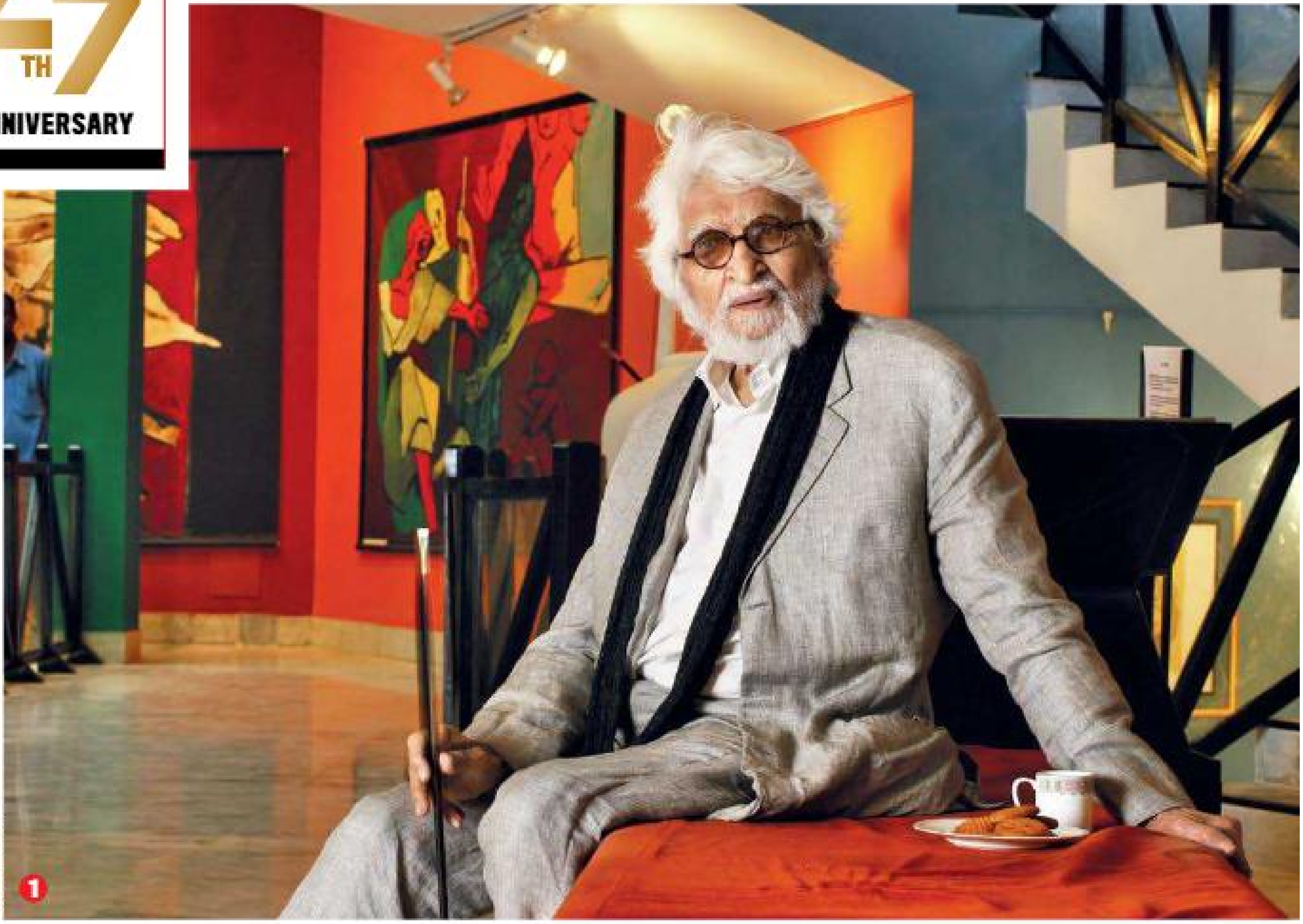
Mr. Singh, a bright child from his early age, always had a positive attitude towards academics. Being the first Chartered Accountant in his family, the dynamic leader has consistently maintained a strong track record of performance at JIS Group. Not only in India, Mr. Singh has also made his mark overseas and attended various global educational summits and delegations hosted by renowned organizations from time to time. Always looking for improving the business, Mr. Singh has visited several countries including USA, UK, France, Japan, Russia, Switzerland, Turkey, and many international Universities. He has initiated and signed 76 MoUs with eminent organizations across the globe. His constant pursuit of excellence has led him to participate in over 100 national and international conferences in the areas of higher education, finance and commerce, management, and business ventures.

"Unity is vision; it must have been part of the process of learning to see." - keeping Henry Adams's words in mind, Sardar Simarpreet Singh firmly believes that associating with renowned organizations is crucial for the advancement of educational sector. He has already been associated with the Bengal Chamber of Commerce and Industries, Confederation Of Indian Industry, Indian Chamber Of Commerce, Indo-American Chamber Of Commerce, Merchants' Chamber of Commerce & Industry (MCCI), Calcutta Management Association (CMA), Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce & Industry (FICCI), Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) YI Membership, National Association of Software and Services Companies (NASSCOM) and National Council Member of Center For Education Growth & Research (CEGR) and many more.

His quest for excellence earned him many accolades, including "**Editor's Choice Education Award**" for Remarkable Services in Education Field as a Young Entrepreneur by Dialogue India Academia 2018 and he has also been felicitated by the Barrackpore Press Club with the "**Most Promising Entrepreneurship Award**" for outstanding and exemplary achievements in Entrepreneurship and Educational Progress. In addition, he was awarded the "**Best Education Leaders and Institutions (University) Award**" in favour of JIS Group at the West Bengal Education Leadership Awards 2018. Furthermore, he was honored with the "**Editor's Choice Education Excellency Award**" for Remarkable Services in the Education Field (Young Entrepreneur) at the 6th Dialogue INDIA Academic Awards 2018. He has also been conferred the Visionary Leader of the Year award by ASSOCHAM in the "**Leadership Conclave 2022 & Excellence Awards**" for his immense contribution to Higher Education.

HIS MESSAGE TO THE YOUTH

True to the motto of JIS Group - Igniting Minds, Empowering lives, the journey has already begun. Sardar Simarpreet Singh earnestly believes that the youth of today is the future of tomorrow. He encourages everyone to – "learn new things and look for opportunities to do so. Keep learning from your flaws, harness your potential to the fullest and set an example for others"



GETTY IMAGES

1

THE BEST OF INDIA

ARTISTS

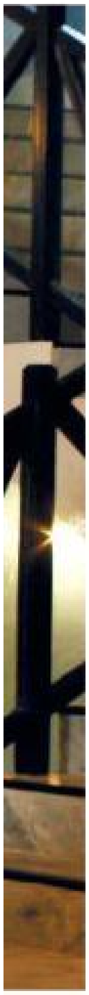
A GALLERY OF GREATS

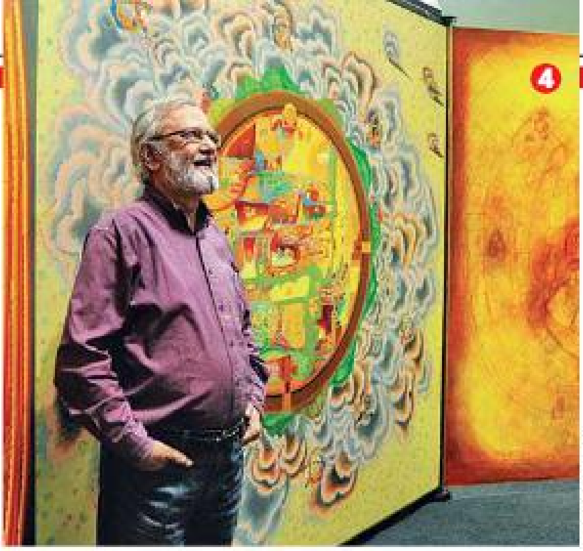
Breathing modernity into an ancient canvas needed a kind of mindful iconoclasm. Ten masters who did it in ways personal, political, spiritual...

By GILES TILLOTSON

Art historian and Senior VP, Exhibitions & Publications, DAG, New Delhi

Far more urban Indians engage with modern art today than they did in 1947. Back then, only a handful of critics (including foreign residents) were alert to the stirrings among India's young artists; now, almost anyone can rattle off the names of half a dozen eminent 20th-century masters, and some of them may even know the prices they command at auctions. This change makes the task of choosing 'ten of the best' even harder. It is like that game of selecting a dream cricket

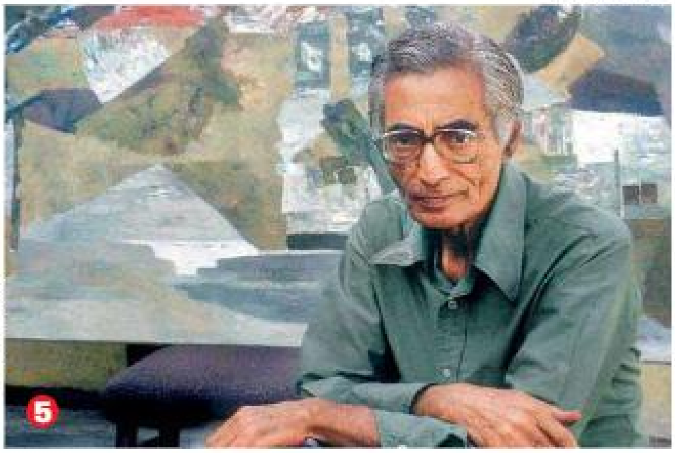




VIVAN MEHRA

GETTY IMAGES

YASBANT NEGI



1. M.F. Husain
(1915–2011)

2. Francis Newton Souza
(1924-2002)

3. S.H. Raza
(1922-2016)

4. Gulammohammed Sheikh
(1937–)

5. Ram Kumar
(1924-2018)

team from all historical players—calculated only to provoke outrage at one's exclusions, with no points scored for the unavoidable inclusions. Following that spirit, we might ask, what are the specialist skills we must ensure are covered? In the field of visual art, what talents must our dream team, between them, possess?

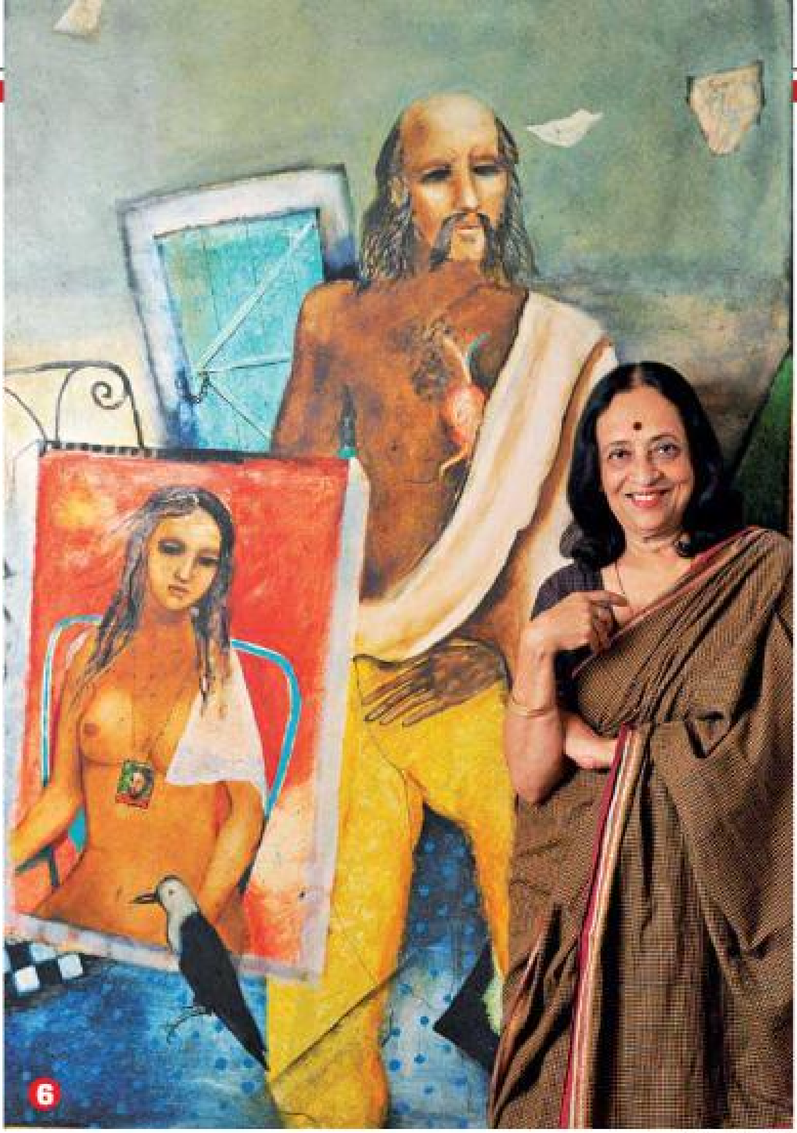
First up, we need as captain the charismatic showman, the master of spin, if you will. That immediately brings in **M.F. Husain** (1915-2011), who held a line—in more senses than one—for over 60 years, and knew how to sell himself so well that he can now never be dethroned. Next up, we need the Bad Boy, the rebel out of control. Despite a crowd of also-rans, **Francis Newton Souza** (1924-2002) leads the pack. You may lament that his rebellion was personal and not political, and deplore his vision of women, but for pure savagery, he is unsurpassed. Violence was a condition of modernity in the last century. So too was the position of the émigré. You might object that we already have the émigré covered with our first two players, but Souza was a restless one, and Husain reluctant. For the quiet migrant who engaged with his host country without losing his sense of origins, we need **S.H. Raza** (1922-2016), the repetitive Tantric Monet of the Cote d'Azure.

Besides showing us the world anew, what else can art do? Well, it tells stories. No longer the old, familiar sacred tales with fixed iconographies that we are taught, but rather the personal, half-remembered anecdotes we are half-invited to share. As with the other roles, there are a host of contenders, but I choose **Gulammohammed Sheikh** (1937—), mainstay of the Baroda School. Closer to the spiritual domain is the ascetic, who makes icons to aid our meditation. Many would choose an abstractionist for this purpose, to avoid the noisy distraction of things; but I prefer to meditate in nature, and so I select the nearly abstract landscapes of **Ram Kumar** (1924-2018). Like terrains surveyed at dawn, his images keep us guessing, inquisitively exploring.

Another significant change since 1947 is diversity: caste, sexuality, and, most importantly, the emergence of women artists in strength and number. Objecting to their exclusion would certainly be justified. Some find it problematic to treat them as a category, since we do not speak of 'men artists'. Is it reasonable to expect a distinctive—more feminine—view of the world from a woman artist? My view is that we have no right to demand it, but we might get it regardless, because

CHANDRADEEP KUMAR

8



6

VIVAN MEHRA

7

BANDEEP SINGH

6. Anjolie Ela Menon *(1940–)*

7. Nilima Sheikh *(1945–)*

8. Nalini Malani *(1946–)*

women necessarily share a different experience of a world that is still male-dominated, both in the home and in the workplace. It is harder for women even to reach art's places of work—the studio and the gallery—but once they have reached, they tell their own stories.

We cannot include here the obvious women's captain, Amrita Sher-Gil, because she died before Independence. So, we skip a generation to **Anjolie Ela Menon** (1940—). The figures who animate her elegiac works appear melancholic. The sense of confinement, of a tethering to some distant place and time, totally belies Menon's high-profile, international life. It seems to point disturbingly to some-

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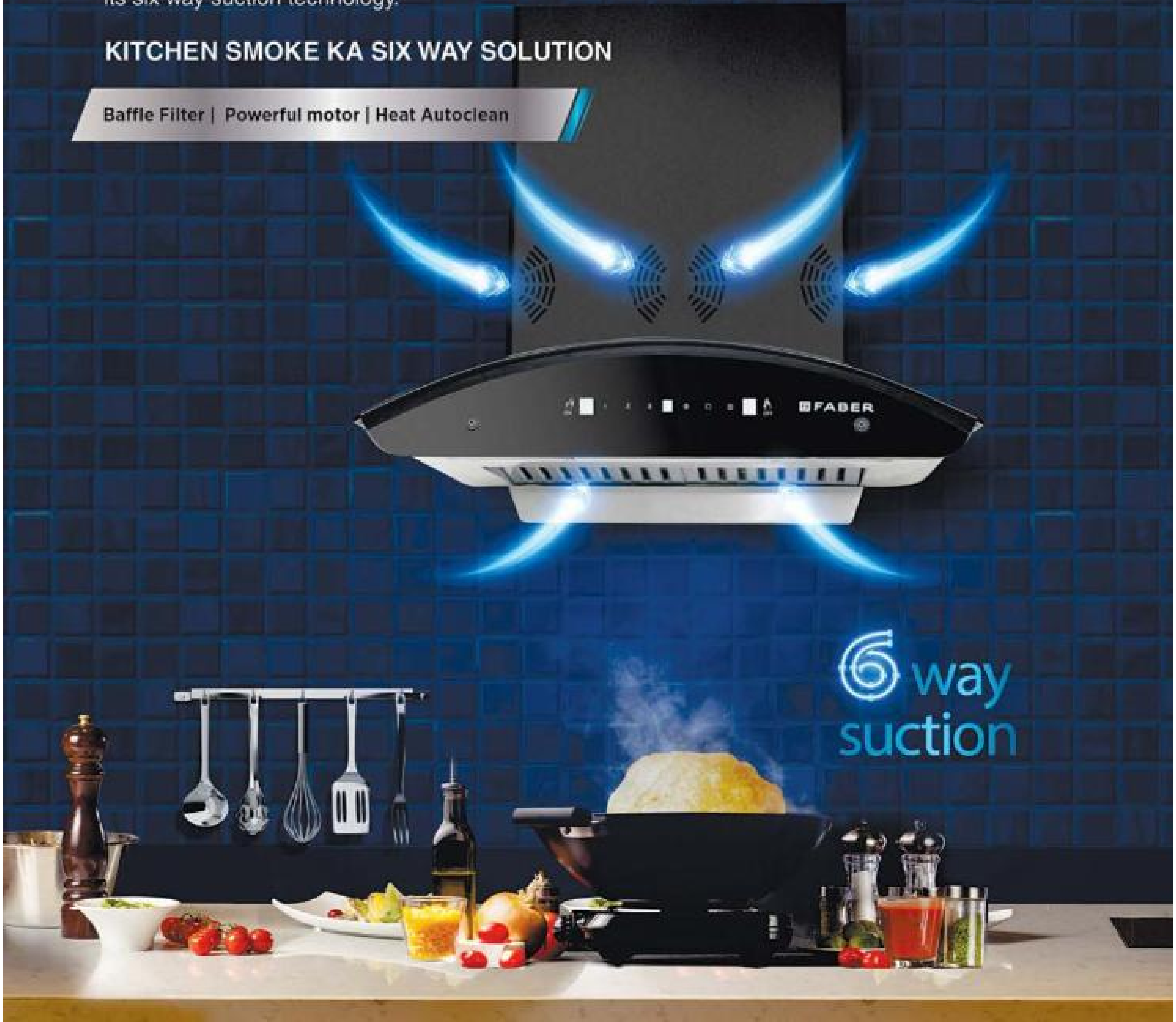

FAWZAN HUSAIN

9. Mrinalini Mukherjee *(1949-2015)*

10. Meera Mukherjee *(1923-1998)*

thing unsaid. Where Menon gives us mystery, **Nilima Sheikh** (1945—) is a more transparent storyteller, sometimes making us confront familiar but appalling narratives about the condition of women. We are disoriented as we encounter a sombre theme like bride-burning, rendered on a small scale, with a light palette and watercolour medium, or as we walk into an installation of screens that seemed innocuously inviting from across the room. When drawing inspiration from Rajput and Mughal miniature paintings, she revisits one concern of Abanindranath's Bengal School while, at last, evolving a truly modern idiom rather than merely lapsing into an atavistic one. Sharing a feminist outlook, and even more contemporary in rendering, is the work of **Nalini Malani** (1946—), which encompasses video as well as traditional media. Born in Karachi of mixed parentage, she was a child of Partition, and stands in this list for many such migrants. While class privilege might have helped her surpass that trauma, India's continuing religious conflict keeps it painfully in focus.

Women are also numbered among the preeminent sculptors of the post-Independence period. My choice, to complete our team, is of the two Mukherjees, both of whom died, not as outrageously young as Sher-Gil, but sooner than they might have. **Meera Mukherjee** (1923-98) is one of the great 20th century 'primitivists'. Rejecting her western academic training, she lived in the tribal Bastar district of Chhattisgarh to learn the region's tradition of bronze sculpture. She identified as an artisan as much as an artist; but while she adhered closely, and persistently, to the medium and style of an established craft, she also transformed it, especially through the enhancement of scale and allusion to contemporary political issues. It was an encounter with craft that similarly led **Mrinalini Mukherjee** (1949-2015) to engage with knotted hemp as a medium. Though her ambiguously figurative works often bear titles that point to rural deities, she did not follow any single vernacular tradition closely. The powerful life force, combined with unfamiliar anatomy, suggests alien presences. In her later years, she experimented with ceramic and bronze, producing forms that again often suggest ancient, unknown forms of life. Both Mukherjees embodied a single-mindedness and dedication to work, on a Barbara Hepworth scale that must excite awe and, in some of us, a measure of self-reproach. ■

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> — ***Narayan Das Agrawal, Chancellor, GLA University***

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Futuristic education is the key to achieving a future-proof career - there is no denying the fact. GLA University is where engineering grads fly high placements up to 44 LPA. In the ongoing placement for Batch 2022, the CSE batch has registered 88% placement. So this is the impact of futuristic and experiential learning at GLA that the list of achievers is endless here.

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GLA has signed MOUs with 130+ esteemed national & international institutions and Industries for joint research programs, collaborative curriculum development, faculty exchange, students immersion programs, and practical Knowledge etc. These international tie-ups have enabled GLA to leave global footprints in countries like the USA, the UK, Australia, Singapore, Brazil, etc.

GLA University has 12 research centres/ Centres of Excellence where faculty & students indulge in joint/ individual research projects. Also, the university has received more than 17 crores of grants from the Government of India for research projects.

GLA University has strived hard to achieve a place where they can pave the way for their students towards success. The factors that play the key role in the placement success of GLA are:

TRAINING & PLACEMENT CELL

The Training & Placement Cell (TPC) at GLA University is the key factor for the excellence of the university in terms of placements. TPC focuses on empanelling leading recruiters from the industry. As a result, more than 750 recruiters like Amazon, Wipro, Byju's, Microsoft, Cognizant, Axis Bank, Bank of America, etc. are on the panel of GLA for campus recruitments.

ALUMNI NETWORK

GLA University has a global alumni base of over 33,000 students. More than 6000 alumni are settled at international locations. Such a strong alumni base enables the existing students to remain connected with the alumni and expand their professional network. It helps them get notified about the job opportunities within the alumni network.

JOB-ORIENTED LEARNING

The curriculum of each course at GLA is aligned with the current & future industry requirements. It is the prime objective of the university to prepare its students to undertake professional challenges efficiently. Moreover, the university emphasises experiential learning beyond the classrooms through labs, workshops, guest lectures by thought leaders, seminars, etc.

INDUSTRY EXPOSURE

Students at GLA are exposed to the industry a lot with the help of industrial internships as part of various courses. Also, the university conducts industrial tours for the students so that they can become conversant with the workplace etiquettes and gain a better understanding of business dynamics.

SOFT SKILL TRAINING & INTERVIEW PREPARATION

Soft skill is the key to corporate success. Hence, the Training and Development at GLA organizes soft skill training programs for the students. Also, the interview preparation training through Placement Ready Enhancement Program (PREP)is also imparted to instil students with confidence and skills to nail the top corporate interviews and acquire desired jobs.

The dedicated Training & Placement Cell at GLA University strives hard to expand its corporate connections. 750+ recruiters from diverse domains participate in the Campus Placement Drives at GLA University. The big names like Amazon, Microsoft, VMware, Disney Hotstar, and many others offer packages up to 44 LPA in campus placements at GLA. The average CTC of the university is 6.28 LPA, which is reasonably good.

SCHOLARSHIP

GLA University provides various scholarships on the basis of merit and in entrance examinations, University exams. Scholarship to SC, ST and economically weaker students is provided to University students by Social Welfare Department of govt.

Lights, Camera, Ovation

By **KHALID MOHAMED**

Former editor of Filmfare, film critic, filmmaker and author

Great times, abysmal times. Indian cinema has been the most prolific in the world and also the most uneven one qualitatively, with the Bombay industry's output being the most wide-reaching in its impact and influence. Here are 10 creators who will stay in the hearts and minds forever, come hail, storm or pandemic. The common thread between most of them is their flair for unforgettable music scores, besides their venturesome spirit to set up their own studios and film production banners. You could lynch me for omitting quite a few stalwarts from this strictly restrictive roll-call of 10. With due apologies, then, to Yash Chopra, Vijay Anand, Raj Khosla, Shakti Samanta, Dulal Guha, Asit Sen, Basu Chatterjee, Shyam Benegal and Sai Paranjpye, all of whom belong unquestionably to this Hall of Eternal Fame.

Mehboob Khan

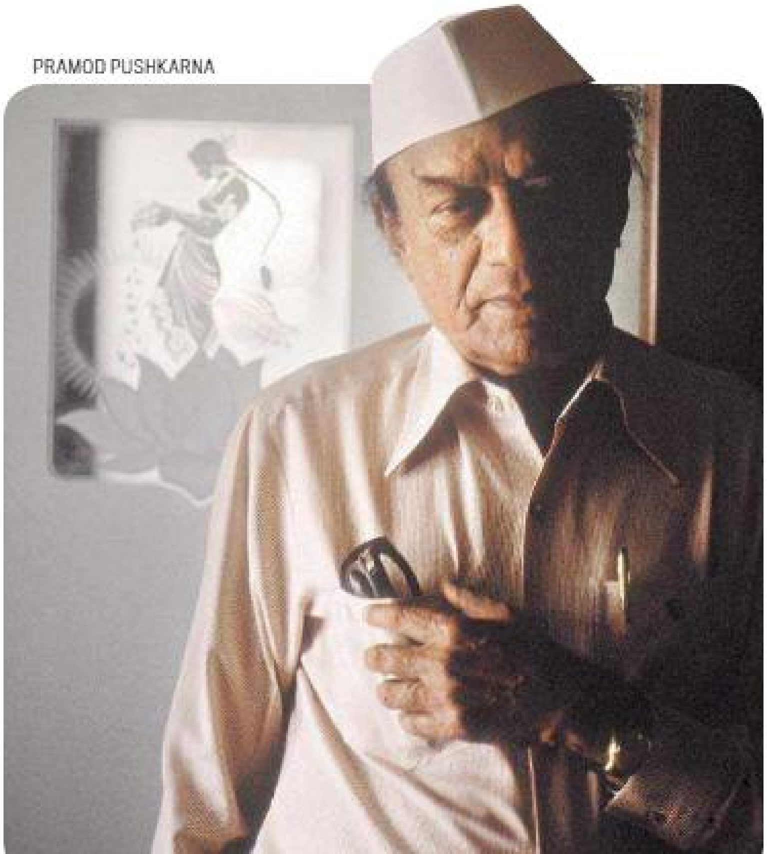
(1907-1964)

Once a horseshoe repairman, the bit-part actor possessed the chutzpah to turn into an immaculately dressed producer-director, one whose cinema mostly spoke to the socialist zeitgeist of the time—expressed most vividly in *Mother India* (1957), a remake of his own *Aurat* (1940). Besides showcasing Nargis in her career-best role, it detailed the everyday struggle of the peasant class, and got an Oscar nomination. Owner of Mehboob Studios, he interspersed rural critiques with romantic dramas. *Andaz* (1949), slick and modern in tone, had Nargis, already engaged to Raj Kapoor, and a lovelorn Dilip Kumar (to die for). *Amar* (1954), too, depicted Dilip in strong negative shades, a first.

V. Shantaram

(1901-1990)

A force of nature, initiated into the cinema watching Dadasaheb Phalke for free as a door boy at a Hubli theatre, he was an early convert to cause-oriented fare, into which he brought the melodramatic canvas of mythologicals and historicals. That streak brought a whole harvest—*Manoos* (1939), *Dr Kotnis ki Amar Kahani* (1946), *Dahej* (1950), *Do Aakhen Baarah Haath* (1957). A U-turn came with the splashy musicals *Jhanak Jhanak Paayal Baje* (1955) and *Navrang* (1959), the latter a thanksgiving to the splendour of colours after recovering from an eye accident, both odes to his new muse Sandhya.



PRAMOD PUSHKARNA

Kamal Amrohi

(1918-1993)

A poet by temperament, one of the quartet that penned the chaste Urdu lines for K. Asif's *Mughal-E-Azam*, he had an uncanny way of making the leading lady breathe soul into his rippling canvases. *Mahal* (1949), "India's first horror film", spun its web around a wraith...a memorable Madhubala. *Daaera* (1953) is an unbelievably undervalued portrayal of the condition of women, with Meena Kumari confined metaphorically within four walls. *Pakeezah* (1972) bears his most legible signature: opulent sets, minimalist acting, grandiose pictursations of haunting melodies. *Razia Sultan* (1983) paled in comparison. His dream project, *Aakhri Mughal*, alas, stayed a dream.

Bimal Roy

(1909-1966)

Coloured by the neo-realism of Vittorio de Sica's *The Bicycle Thieves* (1948) and the rich Indian romantic tradition alike, Roy confected a masterful blend—lithe of frame, almost melodic, but tossed about by inner storms. His oeuvre includes such imperishable works as *Do Bigha Zamin* and *Parineeta* (1953), *Devdas* (1955), *Madhumati* (1958, an uncharacteristic ghost story), *Sujata* (1959), *Parakh* (1960), *Kabuliwala* (1961) and *Bandini* (1963). Alternating between Salil Chaudhary and S.D. Burman, his soundtracks are still a pull on YouTube. The documentaries on the Bengal Famine and Vivekananda show where he was anchored.

Raj Kapoor

(1924-1988)

Son of actor-theatre director Prithviraj, he was to the cinema born. Venturing into direction at age 24 with *Aag* (1948), a portrait of an artist, he established himself as an actor, director and oftentimes editor with *Barsaat* (1949), *Awara* (1951), *Shree 420* (1955), a triptych that integrated entertainment with the Nehruvian ethos and pretty much laid down the DNA of popular Indian cinema. As he went from Tramp to Showman, from socialist-era dramas based around class to more big-budget, self-indulgent epics, the yen for fabulous music, often baroque visuals and the Chaplinesque acting stayed a constant.

K.Asif

(1922-1971)

As soon as he landed in Bombay from Etawah, he busied himself in learning the alphabet of filmmaking. A grand debut with Phool (1945) aside, he unarguably earned his legend status as the creator of Mughal-E-Azam (1960), which took 12 years and repeated cast changes to get to the finishing line. Naushad's raga-strewn score, Madhubala's heart-scorching turn as the Anarkali to Dilip Kumar's brooding Salim, the breath-grabbing sets (that Sheesh Mahal!), and a latent, perhaps inadvertent influence of Russian auteur Sergei Eisenstein mark what is, in my opinion, the best Hindi film ever made. He couldn't see through his last project, Love and God, after its protagonist, Guru Dutt, took his own life.

Guru Dutt

(1925-1964)

Gone too soon at age 39, his training as a dancer under Uday Shankar always seems a relevant fact: unerring timing and movement mark his lens-eye. His flair for lighting and framing were already evident in the two Bombay noir films he debuted with: *Baazi* (1951) and *Jaal* (1952). After a mid-'50s detour to romantic comedy (*Aar Paar, Mr. & Mrs. 55*), he set out to craft the classics—*Pyaasa* (1957), *Kaagaz ke Phool* (1959) and *Sahib Bibi aur Ghulam* (1962)—that burn still like ethereal candle-flames.

INDIA PICTURE

HEMANT PITHWA

Hrishikesh Mukherjee

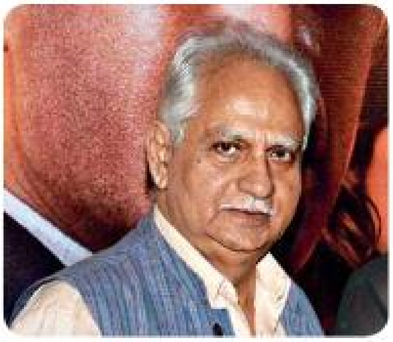
(1922-2006)

A protégé of Bimal Roy, and already multi-gifted as assistant director, cameraman and editor, he reserved a special nook for himself amidst Bollywood's magnum opuses with a charming set of small, human, middle-of-the-road films. The colours ranged across very many microtones—from *Anari* (1959), to *Anuradha* (1960), *Anupama* (1966), *Satyakam* (1969), *Guddi*, *Anand* (both 1971), *Abhimaan* (1973), they all had nuanced, often near-literary portraitures and an unfailing yen for storytelling. And yet, many would remember him for his comedies *Chupke Chupke* (1975) and *Gol Maal* (1979).

Ramesh Sippy

(1947-)

The wunderkind-son of producer G.P. Sippy originally had an army story in his mind before the Salim-Javed script morphed into what was to become cinema history. The dacoit-vs-village epic *Sholay* (1975)—Kurosawa's *Seven Samurai*, Anthony Quinn-starrer *Guns for San Sebastian* and other borrowings too numerous to count, all brought to boil into a flaming red curry—stands rock-firm as one of the most adored entertainers of all time. Sippy did give us *Shakti* (1982), *Saagar* (1985) and *Buniyaad* (1986-87), but that coal could burn so magnificently only once.



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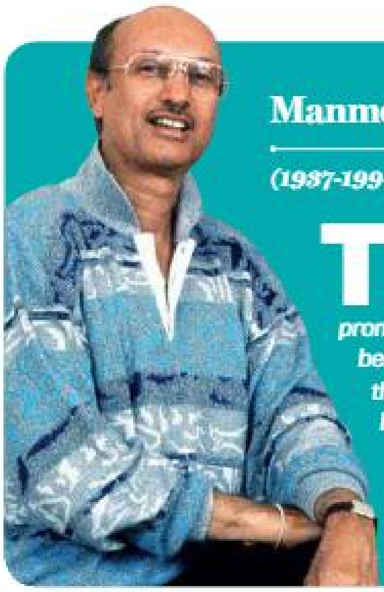

NAMAS BHOJANI

Manmohan Desai

(1937-1994)

The Man of Miracles had once predicted, "You critics can laugh at me but one day you'll call me the Steven Spielberg of India." Well, 'Manji' was prone to exaggeration, but he could convince you to believe in the implausible. Would you believe now that he had commenced his innings with a serious B&W outing, Chhalia (1960), adapted from Dostoevsky's White Nights? For, his packed masala box will always be known for that ultimate condiment: Amar Akbar Anthony (1977).

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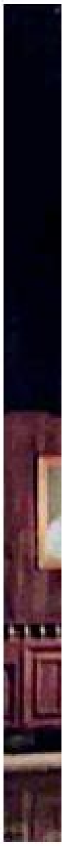
By **NASREEN MUNNI KABIR**

Director, television producer and author

Once Upon a Time in Bollywood

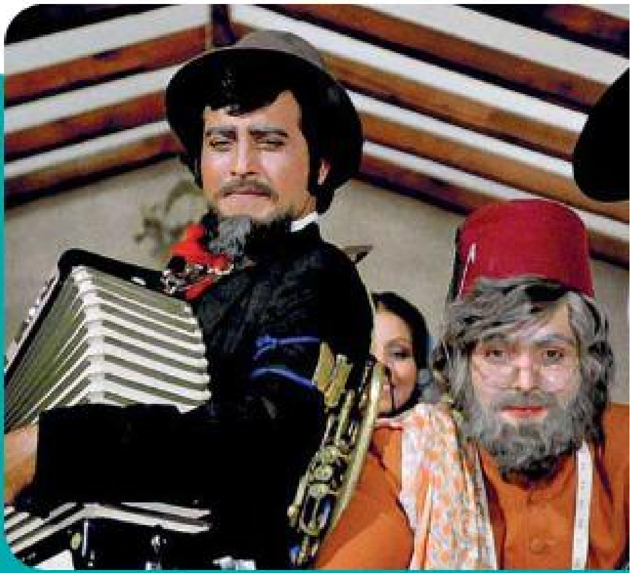
So many films by the same filmmaker are personal favourites that it was an agonising task choosing between them. Mother India or Andaz? Pyaasa, Sahib Bibi... or Mr. & Mrs. 55? Awaara or Shree 420? Devdas or Do Bigha Zamin? Selecting 10 films from a period of 75 years is inherently impossible. But here's a list, in alphabetical order, of landmark movies that have deeply impacted popular Hindi cinema.



Awaara

(1951, B&W)

Raj Kapoor's masterpiece took India, Russia and the Middle East by storm, making him one of the early international stars of Indian cinema. With its many twists and turns, it tells the story of Raj, a roguish and troubled hero who turns to crime. Raj is finally saved by Rita (the wonderful Nargis) and reunited with his estranged father, Judge Raghunath (played by Raj's real-life father, Prithviraj Kapoor). Expertly written by K.A. Abbas, the film centres around the theme of nature versus nurture. M.R. Achrekar's opulent sets, fabulous music and lyrics by Shankar-Jaikishan, Shailendra and Hasrat Jaipuri make this an enduring pleasure.



Amar Akbar Anthony

(1977, Colour)

Manmohan Desai's originality and sense of fun brought the lost-and-found theme alive from *Kismet* (1943) to his time, and for the years that followed. *Amar Akbar Anthony* is an utter delight and has everything going for it—national integration, humour, great music, witty dialogue, lively performances, and much unpredictable madness. Importantly, it

Deewar

(1973, Colour)

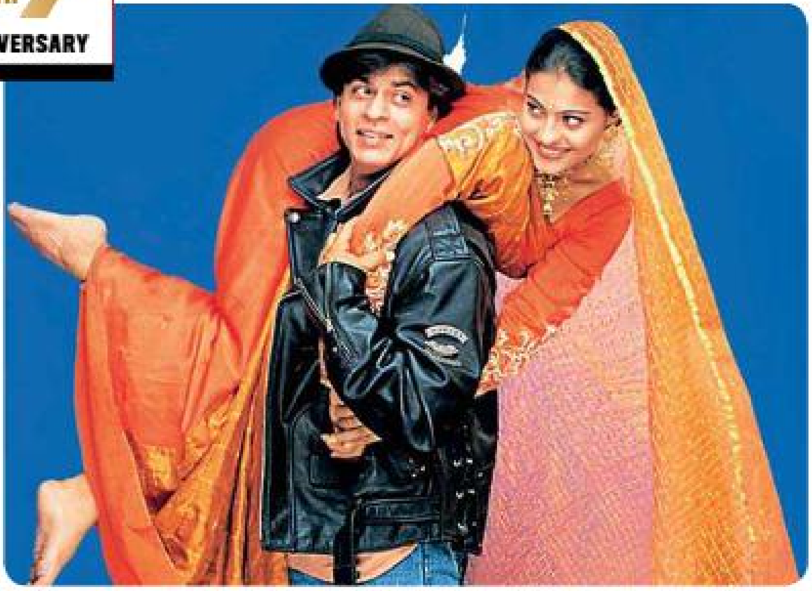
Yash Chopra's film remains an enduring favourite, chiefly for its powerful storyline by Salim-Javed, who took Hindi cinema to new heights from the early 1970s onwards. In films by this famous writing duo, Amitabh Bachchan deservedly cemented his long and illustrious career—and *Deewar* is among the star's most commanding performances. Inspired by *Mother India* and *Gunga Jumna*, the film's story moves from village to city and, like the earlier classics, centres around two brothers on opposite sides of the law. The strength of Salim Khan's screenplay and Javed Akhtar's memorable dialogue make this an all-time great.

changed what was expected of the hero—to his many attributes, humour was added as an integral part, and so *Amar Akbar Anthony* was unwittingly instrumental in phasing out the role of the comedian. In one scene, we see Amitabh Bachchan fighting, in another he has us in splits.

Devdas

(1955, B&W)

Based on Sarat Chandra Chatterjee's Bengali novel, the story of Devdas has obsessed generations of filmmakers, resulting in over 15 filmed versions in various Indian languages. For me, Bimal Roy's reimagining of the life of this flawed hero, unable to go against societal pressures and marry his childhood sweetheart, is the subtlest by far. Suchitra Sen as Paro, Vyjayanthimala as Chandramukhi, are superb, while Dilip Kumar brings an emotional truth rarely seen in Hindi cinema to his character. His silent presence is matched by Bimal Roy's cinematic eloquence. Together, they remind us of the saying, "Less is more."



Dilwale Dulhania Le Jayenge

(1995, Colour)

A modern love story upholding family and traditional values, *DDLJ* came as a breath of fresh air and was well in sync with the changing India of the 1990s. With the success of his debut feature, multi-talented Aditya Chopra re-established the romantic film as the mainstay of popular Hindi cinema. He also encouraged a whole new set of behind-the-scenes talent, including Farah Khan and Karan Johar. Following the film's release, Shah Rukh Khan and Kajol were counted among the best-loved romantic screen pairs. Great performances, lively songs and dances underpin this now-cult blockbuster that still runs and runs.

Junglee

(1961, colour)

No list of influential films is complete without a Shammi Kapoor starrer. Excelling in many 1960s films, he is undoubtedly the model for the 1990s heroes—carefree young men who dance well and love madly. Setting a formula for the romantic film for many decades, Subodh Mukherjee's uplifting movie can also be credited with creating the craze of using Kashmir as a song backdrop. A confident star, Shammi Kapoor was happy to be cast opposite newcomers. Here, the lovely Saira Banu is in her first film. *Junglee*'s happy ending is a given; it's Shammi Kapoor's charisma that's fresh and innovative.

Sholay

(1975, Colour)

A surprisingly slow starter, Ramesh Sippy's epic multi-starrer has great action sequences, popular music by R.D. Burman, and many dramatic storylines, all brought together seamlessly in a tightly knit Salim-Javed screenplay. Individually, everyone in the excellent cast creates unforgettable and distinctive characters, some leading the narrative and others appearing in only a few scenes, while its villain, Gabbar Singh (the remarkable Amjad Khan), famously went on to become an enduring cult figure. *Sholay* continues to enjoy its own unique status for audiences across generations. It has also given filmgoers some of Hindi cinema's most quotable quotes.

INDIA PICTURE

Mother India

(1957, Colour)

Some roles come once in a lifetime; so it was for the brilliant Nargis as Radha, the wife of a poor farmer. This Mehboob Khan epic is a towering landmark and is perhaps the best-known Hindi film title worldwide, telling a heartfelt story deeply rooted in the soil of India. The 12 songs work like chapters, each announcing a different phase in Radha's life of struggle. Mehboob Khan knew how to marry melodrama with a grand vision. *Mother India* was the first Indian film to be nominated for the Oscars in the Best Foreign Film category.

Mughal-E-Azam

(1960, B&W with three reels in colour)

K. Asif's dream took years in the making, but he never gave up and, in 1961, this visionary director released his impressive masterwork. Set during the 16th century in Emperor Akbar's reign, this is a purely fictionalised reworking of history, creating the now-legendary doomed lovers of cinema, Salim and Anarkali. Superior Urdu dialogue, spoken to perfection by exceptional actors of the ilk of Dilip Kumar, Madhubala and Prithviraj Kapoor, and Naushad's music made *Mughal-E-Azam* a game-changer in Indian cinema history. Many stage adaptations have been made of Hollywood films, but *Mughal-E-Azam* was the first Indian feature to be reworked for the theatre, most successfully by Feroz Khan.

Pyaasa

(1957, B&W)

Its intensity, sophisticated storytelling, subtle acting, Sahir Ludhianvi's poetry, S.D. Burman's haunting music, V.K. Murthy's lighting and framing that heightens the film's mood, adding psychological depth to the characters– all this and more have given *Pyaasa* a revered place in Indian film history. Besides its sharp observation of the dark side of human nature, the film tells a timeless story of an artist's disillusionment with a materialistic world–so far from the frivolous love story. In the hands of Guru Dutt, a true master of cinema, *Pyaasa* proves that Hindi film conventions have great power.

Photos: INDIA PICTURE

KHADI

PM Modi fulfilling Bapu's dream of Swadeshi

The pioneering efforts of the Khadi & Village Industries Commission have made khadi a fashionable choice not just in India but internationally too. The Mantra of 'Khadi for nation, Khadi for fashion and khadi for transformation' by Hon'ble Prime Minister has become means of transformation.

On 2 October, 2022, the Connaught Place outlet of the Khadi & Village Industries Commission (KVIC) in New Delhi registered khadi sales worth Rs 1.34 crore, the highest-ever such sale in a single day. From the very first Mann Ki Baat programme on 3 October, 2014, the Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modiji has been exhorting citizens to support khadi by buying khadi garments in large numbers on Gandhi Jayanti as well as on other festive occasions. "You may be wearing a variety of clothes with different fabrics and company brands in your family. But is it not possible to include khadi too? When you buy khadi products, it helps poor people light lamps on Diwali," he said. Every year since then Indians have answered his call to support khadi with great enthusiasm by giving record-breaking sales. Gandhi Jayanti in 2022 broke all previous records. As Shri Manoj Kumar, Chairman of KVIC, points out, 2022 has been a watershed year for the organisation and has seen it achieve key milestones and the launch of important initiatives.

Not only on Mann Ki Baat, Modiji has been promoting khadi at every opportunity, from international forums to key events and gatherings. At the Khadi Utsav in Ahmedabad this year, Modiji said, "Today a huge market is ready for all the people associated with khadi. We should not miss this opportunity." He further added: "I also want to make an appeal to the people of the country from the banks of the Sabarmati. Gift only the products made in Khadi Village Industries during the upcoming festivals."

It has been a constant endeavour of Modiji to popularise khadi, especially among youth. Under his visionary leadership, khadi has reinvented itself into trendy fashion apparel. It is the top choice of leading fashion designers, has been embraced by the youth and is seen at fashion shows across the world. The last eight years have seen unprecedented growth in khadi production, increasing from 107.85 million sq. metres in 2015-16 to 194.47million sq metres in 2021-22. Since 2015 -16 khadi has grown at annual rate of 13.38 percent.

Over the last several years, Shri Narendra Modi has left no stone unturned to popularize Khadi and create a mass movement. The Prime Minister himself regularly wears Khadi and has been doing so since the very early days. Shri Modi has given the Mantra of **'Khadi for nation, Khadi for fashion and khadi for transformation'** – the idea that Khadi made a symbol of national pride and a fashion statement, which is being popular among the youth

> **When we purchase Khadi, we are brightening the lives of the lakhs of weavers who toil day and night**
>
> **Shri Narendra Modi**
> Hon'ble Prime Minister

KHADI TIRANGA YATRA

KVIC celebrated India's 75th Independence Day celebrations with much fanfare in different events from Kashmir to Mumbai. A highlight of this was a unique Khadi Tiranga Yatra which was taken out in Varanasi on 13 August, 2022. Around 20,000 people participated in the two-kilometre Yatra led by Chairman of KVIC Shri Manoj Kumar, who made an appeal to everyone to hoist the tricolour in homes and contribute to fulfilling PM Modiji's dream of 'Har Ghar Tiranga'. The Yatra, taken out by the Khadi Parivar, consisted of a large number of officials and employees associated with KVIC. They were accompanied by weavers and artisans as well as school students.

KHADI UTSAV

On August 27, the PM inaugurated Khadi Utsav in Ahmedabad under the auspices of Gujarat Rajya Khadi Gramodyog Board. Modiji also tried his hands on the charkha as part of the Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav. Khadi became the symbol of the country's self-respect during the freedom movement. Khadi that broke the chains of slavery during colonial rule, can also become an inspiration to make India developed and self-reliant, Modiji said. The PM was greeted in a unique way by 7,500 women, who were spinning charkhas simultaneously when he arrived. Referring to the special event, Modiji said, "Your hands on the charkha are weaving the future of India. This bank of the Sabarmati has become blessed today, as 7,500 sisters and daughters have created new history by spinning the thread of strength together."

The event also showcased 22 charkhas from different generations since the 1920s, in an exhibition called 'Evolution of Charkhas'. It featured charkhas used during the freedom struggle to modern-day charkhas featuring the latest innovations.

HAR GHAR TIRANGA

'Har Ghar Tiranga' was a campaign under the aegis of Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav to encourage people to bring the Tiranga or Indian tri-colour home and to hoist it to mark the 75th year of India's Independence. The campaign was a huge boost to the sale of khadi flags this year. As a result of this campaign, Khadi Gramodyog saw a whopping 75 percent increase in demand for flags. The campaign aimed to hoist 20 crore national flags atop people's houses all across the country from August 13 to 15. Although a variety of materials were allowed, the first preference of buyers was still hand-spun and handwoven khadi flags. Not only citizens, orders poured in from institutions and organisations as well.

OTHER DEVELOPMENTS

Chairman, KVIC Shri Manoj Kumar inaugurated 72 Units under PMEGP on 17 September, 2022 at the KVIC Office, Mumbai. He also disbursed Margin Money Subsidy of Rs 27.43 crore to 720 PMEGP beneficiaries. These units are expected to generate self-employment for 5,760 artisans. On 21 September, 2022, Shri Manoj Kumar visited PMTC, Pampore and Srinagar where he distributed 200 electric potter wheels to pottery artisans and 12 Hydra Pulper Machines to papier-mache artisans. He also distributed 40 agarbatti machines to Jammu artisans. KVIC put up a kiosk on Kartavya Path, New Delhi from 17 September to 2 October, 2022 to promote khadi and inspire people to use it.

MANDATE OF KVIC

Khadi and Village Industries Commission has three main objectives which guide its functioning. These are:

- **The Social Objective** - Providing employment in rural areas
- **The Economic Objective** - Providing saleable articles
- **The Wider Objective** - Creating self-reliance amongst people and building up a strong rural community spirit.

The commission achieves these objectives through various schemes and programmes.

KVIC also works on building reserves of raw materials and implements for producers, creation of common service facilities for processing of raw materials as semi-finished goods and provisions of facilities for marketing of KVI products apart from training of artisans and encouragement of co- operative efforts amongst them.

KVIC promotes research in production techniques in the khadi sector. Further, it provides financial assistance to institutions and individuals for development and operation of khadi and village industries.

THE RELEVANCE OF KHADI & VILLAGE INDUSTRIES

Khadi & Village Industries are labour intensive. In the aftermath of industrialisation and the automating of all operations, textile and rural industries are uniquely tailored to a workforce surplus country like India. Another advantage of Khadi & Village Industries is that they require little to no start-up capital.

SOME KVIC SCHEMES

PMEGP Scheme (Prime Minister's Employment Generation Programme): PMEGP is a credit-linked subsidy scheme for developing new micro, medium and small firms and creating employment opportunities. KVIC serves as the main agency for PMEGP implementation. The loan amount of Rs 25 lakh has been increased to 50 lakh and Rs. 20 lakh for service sector is benefitting a lot of people.

Honey Mission: KVIC developed the Honey (Bee) Mission to assist beekeeping and create job opportunities in beekeeping states. One of the goals of the SFURTI Scheme is to promote scientific beekeeping practices.

Workshed Scheme for Khadi Artisans: The KVIC scheme provides financial help to BPL khadi artisans to construct work sheds. KVIC ensures that financial aid provided under the scheme is used to benefit the artisans.

Khadi Reform and Development Programme: KRDP strives to provide rural artisans with a low-cost way to generate money in their households. Traditional village industries such as handmade paper, honey, cosmetics, herbal health, agro-food processing and leather are also supported.

Interest Subsidy Eligibility Certificate: Banks can obtain loans at a reduced interest rate through the KVIC scheme if they have an Interest Subsidy Eligibility Certificate issued by KVIC.

Modified Market Development Assistance (MMDA): The Modified Market Development Assistance scheme was introduced to help khadi institutions to reorient their activities extending adequate emphasis as well as ensure quality khadi to costumer.

Scheme of Fund for Regeneration of Traditional Industries (SFURTI): The SFURTI programme provides need-based assistance for production tool replacement, product development, the establishment of Common Facility Centres (CFC), quality improvement, improved marketing, training, and capacity building. Under this programme, existing poor khadi organisations receive financial support to improve their infrastructure and choose khadi sales locations.

The Interest Rate Subsidy Programme: The interest subsidy programme of KVIC applies to particular loans provided by banking institutions.

THE TRANSFORMATION OF KVIC

As an apex organisation under the Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises, KVIC seeks to "plan, promote, facilitate, organise and assist in the establishment and development of khadi and village industries in the rural areas in coordination with other agencies engaged in rural development wherever necessary." In recent years, this mission has taken on top speed, with Khadi transforming itself into an e-commerce behemoth, selling a diverse range of appealing products.

Having Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi as its brand ambassador has come as a boon for Khadi. Modiji has been promoting Khadi at every opportunity and at every forum, including internationally. Modiji says, "When we buy a khadi product, we light up the lives of millions of weavers who work hard day and night." It is a reflection of the present government's commitment to rural India that the acceptance of khadi products at the national and international level has multiplied in recent years. KVIC's endeavour is to not only build upon the achievements of the Commission in the last eight years but take it to the next level and increase the global market share of these products.

KVIC had organized a "Khadi India Pavilion" at the India International Trade Fair 2022 through more than 200 stalls to showcase premium Khadi Garments & Village Industries products made by artisans in rural surroundings. The Pavilion contextualized the PM's vision of "Vocal for Local, Local to Global" and was visited by several dignitaries, Diplomats/High Commissions of Embassies, Members of Parliament, besides lakhs of visitors. The Khadi India Pavilion registered a record sale of Rs 12.06 crore. Supply orders of various products were received by the artisans & entrepreneurs, which would be beneficial for marketing of their products in future.

TRANSFORMATION OF RURAL INDIA

As a nodal agency of PMEGP, KVIC is having a massive and direct impact in rural areas. KVIC's unique employment model is turning job seekers into entrepreneurs and job givers. 10-20 people can be employed immediately by the loan receivers. The online scheme is run with complete transparency and efficiency in operations.

Khadi is also spearheading women's empowerment in rural India. Women love working with Khadi because it is work from home and gives them dignity and respect. It is work they like to do. Khadi's popular papad-making units (which produce the popular Lijjat brand of papads) are fully run by women. Not only has a new unit just opened in Varanasi, they are exploring the possibility of empowering women in other states by training them.

> **7,500 sisters and daughters created history by spinning yarn on a spinning wheel together. Your hands, while spinning yarn on Charkha, are weaving the fabric of India.**
>
> **Shri Narendra Modi**
> Hon'ble Prime Minister

THE FUTURE OF KHADI

Khadi is truly the fabric of the future. Due to its unique eco-friendly nature and vivid fabric qualities, it has become popular with leading fashion designers. Expanding the colour palette, westernizing the cuts and creating new trends, khadi has transcended itself to become the sustainable fabric of the future.

Today Khadi sells a wide variety of products beyond khadi garments, including things like soaps, incense sticks, honey, tea, mehndi and much more. Consumers trust the brand hugely. A slew of fashion shows and mega exhibitions are in the works. With the international market having opened up, there will be khadi exhibitions at the global level.

Be it Indian khadi garments, handicraft products or food items made in village industries, these items have given international recognition to India as a nation. Wrought from the artisanal heritage of India and deeply embedded in our rural culture, these products are not only world class but also close to nature. Coming from our villages, these sustainable products can help battle climate change.

India's top fashion brands are coming forward to associate themselves with khadi. India is making record production and sales of khadi products. In fact, the sales of khadi products have increased by more than four times in the last eight years and the turnover of India's Khadi and Village Industries has crossed Rs 1 lakh crore. The future truly belongs to Khadi.

MOMENTOUS 8 YEARS KVIC

Khadi's Growth Trajectory

Unprecedented jump of over 120.84 percent in the production of Khadi fabric

Khadi production increased from 1078.92 Lakh sq meters in 2015-16 to 1944.66 Lakh sq meters in 2021-2022

80.74% jump in overall production (in quantity) in Khadi sector from 2015-16 to 2021-2022

Despite of COVID Pandemic, KVIC created highest ever employment under PMEGP. KVIC distributed Rs.13923.23 crores as Margin Money from 2014-15 to 2021-22 and subsidy to 5.11 lakh PMEGP project beneficiaries.

Big boost for Khadi artisans with Rs. 45 crore government purchase order to KVIC during 2nd Covid-19 lockdown.

234% growth in Khadi sales from 2015-16 to 2021-2022

During the year 2015-16 44340 projects were setup under PMEGP which generated employment 323362 persons. However the schemes sow gigantic growth and during the year 2021-22 103219projects and generated employment 825752 persons.

KVIC Provided livelihood opportunity to unemployed youth under Honey Mission by distributing Bee – Boxes. KVIC has distributed 175519 Bee-boxes till November 2022 since the KVIC established Honey Mission in 2017-18.

With over 750 products, the village industries sector is booming like never before

Since 2015-16, production in village industries has grown by 144% (approx)

In 2021-2022, the overall turnover of Khadi and Village Industries reached Rs. 1,15,415 crore.

By **RAJEEV MASAND**

Former film journalist

INDIA PICTURE

The Eyes Have it

Divas whose souls lit up the screen like flickering diyas...

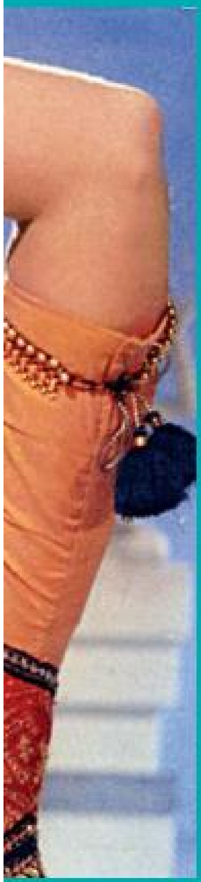
Nutan

Her delicate face, half-hidden in the folds of her saree, turned away as her lover walks away—Nutan was eternal in the eponymous role in *Sujata* (1959), a woman struggling for identity against a brutal caste system. The role that defined her as an actress; we saw her vulnerability, the quiet ache of a girl seeking acceptance. She mined that delicate vein of silver in *Seema* (1955) and *Bandini* (1963), but there was also playfulness in *Tere Ghar Ke Samne* (1863), as she skipped down the Qutub Minar's steps with Dev Anand, singing about the hum in their hearts. That blend of softness and steel flowed into a variety of roles over four decades, that unforgettable sweetness of her smile lighting up the screen even amidst the greys of life.

Smita Patil

She played many incandescent roles in a short-lived career, but two stood out—both where she played, ironically, actresses. In Shyam Benegal's *Bhumika* (1977), she was Usha, struggling to find her identity through abuse and emotional upheaval, succeeding as a star even as the men around her exploit and stifle her. In *Arth* (1982), she was the highly-strung, mentally fragile Kavita, in an affair with her much-married director. Smita interplays the high-voltage scenes with her contemporary Shabana Azmi beautifully—the 'other woman' so haunted by the ghost of 'the wife'. Emotions chased across her face in films from across genres, whether *Manthan* (1976), or as she let her hair down and captured joyfulness and sensuality in *Namak Halaal* (1982). The image that stays with you, perhaps fittingly, is from her last year: the sheer rebelliousness as she hurls chillies in the face of her tormentor (*Mirch Masala*, 1986).

INDIA PICTURE



Waheeda Rehman

There was something about the way Waheeda Rehman danced. It caught the eye of Guru Dutt, a trained dancer himself, and convinced him she could act. In *Pyaasa* (1957), he cast her as the young, waif-like prostitute in love with the poet. Waheeda is so compelling as Gulabo, begging Vijay's ex-lover to publish his work, tears streaming down her face in half-light when asked to define her relationship with him. But whether pathos, the part-reenactment of her own journey as a newcomer in the industry (*Kaagaz Ke Phool*, 1959), the joy of breaking free of shackles (*Guide*, 1965), or as the senile, sharp-tongued mother in *Namkeen* (1982), there was always dignity in her performances, an inherent poise—evident from when she was that 18-year-old debutante, until now, when at 84 she lent her grace to *Skater Girl* (Netflix, 2021).

Shabana Azmi

In *Masoom* (1983), you see two Shabanas—the regular mom, who talks of buying colouring pencils for her daughters, and the steely one who explodes at her husband's illegitimate son. That duality defines her. Shabana Azmi has always poured herself into characters like a shape-shifter. From her award-winning debut as the guilty wife (*Ankur*, 1974), to the petulant begum in *Shatranj Ke Khiladi* (1977), right up to her deliciously wicked witch in *Makdee* (2002), she knows how to effect a transformation in split seconds. Her roles speak for women—quietly rebellious partner (*Swami*, 1977), vulnerable wife (*Fire*, 1996), strong matriarch (*Godmother*, 1999).... What would Hindi cinema be without the blazing talent, fortitude and naturalistic verbal flair of Shabana Azmi? Difficult to even imagine.

INDIA PICTURE

FOCUS
EDUCATION

TISS: CREATING LEADERS FOR SUSTAINABLE FUTURES

Q How do you locate the vision of TISS in the context of the call for higher education to respond to social realities?

Under the visionary leadership of Tatas, TISS was started in 1936 to train professional social workers in context the great depression where the urban centres like Bombay was facing serious health and livelihood crises impacting particularly the working class. Subsequently, be during the partition tragedy or in the aftermath of a series of disasters and humanitarian crises, our faculty members and students were actively engaged in mitigating the effects of such crises. After being integrated into the Higher Education ecosystem in the country as a fully funded Deemed to be University in 1964, the basic character of the Institute as a socially responsive institution continued to drive the academic programmes, research, field action and social policy contributions. This legacy continues even today.

Q Aligned with your Vision, what are the strides TISS is making in adopting NEP 2020?

The new NEP aligned FYUG programmes launched by TISS has (i) multidisciplinary learning (ii) strong field engagement, (iii) rigorous research project and (iv) multi-entry and multi-exit options. BSW (Tuljapur), Bachelor of Arts in Social Sciences (Guwahati and Tuljapur) and Bachelor of Science in Analytics and Sustainability Studies (Mumbai) are the NEP aligned UG programmes at TISS. New PG programmes include Cities and Governance, Global Mental Health, Animal Assisted Therapy, Disaster Informatics and Geospatial Technologies, two International dual degree programmes as well as a collaborative programme on International Electoral Management and Practices with Election Commission of India.

Q What do you think are theunique features of TISS Academic programmes?

TISS offers a pedagogical approach blended with strong theoretical foundations and practice orientations. Academia, society and industry linkages are the corner stones of all our academic programmes in several transdisciplinary areas. Students will be getting cutting edge training at TISS based on the principles of dignity, social justice and equity. All academic programmes, research and field action are linked to several of the SDGs thereby contributing to the global goals while strongly being rooted in local and regional contexts.

Prof. P. K. Shajahan
Dean, Academic Affairs

Meena Kumari

Caught in a candid mood, Lata Mangeshkar once said that singing for Meena Kumari was among the most satisfying experiences of her career. No actress before, or after, matched her voice on screen with as much feeling, the legendary songstress revealed. You can see it in the eternally exquisite '*Ajeeb dastan hai yeh*'– Meena Kumari pours her passion and pain into song, her words travelling, while she sits demurely still in a corner. Perhaps the 'Tragedy Queen' of Hindi cinema mined her real-life pathos for her roles. It resulted in runaway hits like *Baiju Bawra* and *Parineeta* and celluloid classics like *Sahib Bibi Aur Ghulam* and *Pakeezah*–films that would be nothing without the compelling beauty, the melancholy, the sheer drama of Meena Kumari. Her life may have been brutally cut short, but Meena Kumari remains an acting lodestar.

INDIA PICTURE

INDIA PICTURE

Rekha

The Garbo-esque mystique often distracts from her consummate artistry, a feel for layered, complex women that's yielded a canon of pitch-perfect performances (*Ghar*, 1978; *Khoobsurat*, 1980; *Utsav*, 1984) beyond the marquee ones. The legend of Rekha as the sacrificing, jilted lover with husky voice and melancholic eyes, blending reel and real, found its acme in the courtesan of *Umrao Jaan* (1981), under whose irresistible *adaa* and guile hides a heart fragile from repeated betrayal. Seldom has pain looked so beautiful. An immersive, lived-in performance...a role she was born to play.

Sridevi

No other actress can claim to having occupied the No. 1 position across four language cinemas simultaneously: Hindi, Telugu, Tamil and Kannada. Her incredible comedic range (*Mr India*, 1987; *Chaalbaaz*, 1989) is a trope in itself, but you only had to watch *Chandni* (1989), *Lamhe* (1991) or *English Vinglish* (2012) to know she could steal scenes with the tiniest nuances. Cinephiles swear by Kamal Haasan's heart-breaking performance in the climax of *Sadma* (1983), but it's Sridevi, as Reshmi, recently recovered from amnesia, who owns the scene with the puzzled, pitiful look she casts his way, their relationship and his identity now a lost memory. Pure gold.

MANDAR DEODHAR

GETTY IMAGES

Tabu

The poster girl for minimalism in an industry whose SOP is heightened drama, Tabu is that rare contemporary actress who ticks both options in virtually every multiple choice question. Mainstream or Arthouse? Both. Drama or Comedy? Both. Hindi or Regional? Both. Bollywood or International? Both. Is there anything she cannot do?

Blessed with eyes that suggest depth and wisdom beyond her years, Tabu became the muse for some of the sharpest filmmakers at their creative peak: Gulzar (*Maachis*, 1996), Vishal Bhardwaj (*Maqbool*, 2004; *Haider*, 2014), Priyadarshan (*Kaalapani*, 1996; *Virasat*, 1997), Mira Nair (*The Namesake*, 2006), Sriram Raghavan (*Andhadhun*, 2018). And yet, is there another actress equally at home delivering laughs in decidedly escapist fare like *Golmaal Again* (2017)?

Vidya Balan

Vidya Balan is Everywoman. *Tumhari Sulu* (2017), *Kahaani* (2012), *No One Killed Jessica* (2011), *Jalsa* (2022)—in each of these films, she's a wholly identifiable person. Someone you could see in your world and relate to, conveying her inner struggles with so little: subtle body language, little realistic nuances, a conversational lilt. But just as easily, Balan separated each of these roles through her craft—you just couldn't confuse Sabrina with Sulochana. There's a joy in watching Vidya Balan because she invests herself in her characters; whether based on real people like Silk Smitha (*The Dirty Picture*, 2011) or fictional, like the lion-hearted mother of a 13-year-old Amitabh Bachchan in *Paa* (2009). An inordinate willingness to take risks gilds that.

RAJWANT RAWAT

Kangana Ranaut

Although it wasn't until that full-bodied, winning performance in *Queen* (2013) that she actually made it, Kangana had begun laying the foundation through impressive performances in the noughties—*Gangster*, *Woh Lamhe*, *Fashion*, and then *Tanu Weds Manu* (2011). Slowly, a range came into view, instantly likeable characters breaking the stereotype of highly strung, neurotic women that she'd been boxed into. Even in middling fare like *Simran* (2017), she brought a charming authenticity that stayed with you long after you'd forgotten the film. But starting with the flawed *Manikarnika* (2019), Kangana succumbed to showboating. It's hard to find flaws in that performance, or the one in *Thalaivii* (2021), but increasingly these one-woman shows may be denting the legacy of this extraordinary actress.

BANDEEP SINGH

BANDEEP SINGH

Alia Bhatt

She's not even 30 and she's on top of it. In just 10 years after a forgettable debut (*Student of the Year*, 2012), Alia has revealed a genius gift for sucking us into her world, most recently as the you-can't-take-your-eyes-off-her *Gangubai Kathiawadi* (2022). Remember the heart-breaking awkwardness of her first 'pose' as a sex worker, to years later, her resigned wisdom while she unchains a young girl—the beauty of her jaded words seduce you. Alia has prodigious talent. It's there when she breaks a bottle in jealous rage in *Gully Boy* (2019), as she lies drugged, gang-raped, with vacant eyes in *Udta Punjab* (2016), or as she points a gun at the man she loves, her identity unmasked, love battling with duty, in *Raazi* (2018). She has a child-like air and yet every performance is mature. How will Alia Bhatt surprise us in the years to come? Thankfully, we can wait...and watch.

Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav

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HOTELIZATION
FUTURE-PROOFING THE WORKSPACE

Hotelization is now a way to future-proof the existing buildings. It is helping building owners to command higher rents and remain relevant for tenants in a pandemic-like situation.

Collaborative and flexible offices are being developed with hotel-like services and amenities focusing on tenants' workplace satisfaction. The focus is on adding a premium to these offices and reaping benefits. And large office parks in tier 1 metros and shared workplaces are leading the transformation. Two offices located adjacent to each other may have different rents. It is possible as one building could be future-ready and the other may lack the necessary design creativity that meets the occupier's expectations of a truly collaborative workspace.

*Futureproofing of buildings is mainly economic related concept, which ensures that the building continues to create value for investors, is well- occupied and generates rental income in line with best buildings in the market through features and services upgrades using construction, amenity, and technology interventions. This also includes sustainability features in buildings to make them more efficient across their entire emission value chain along with the measurable impact of such upgrades.

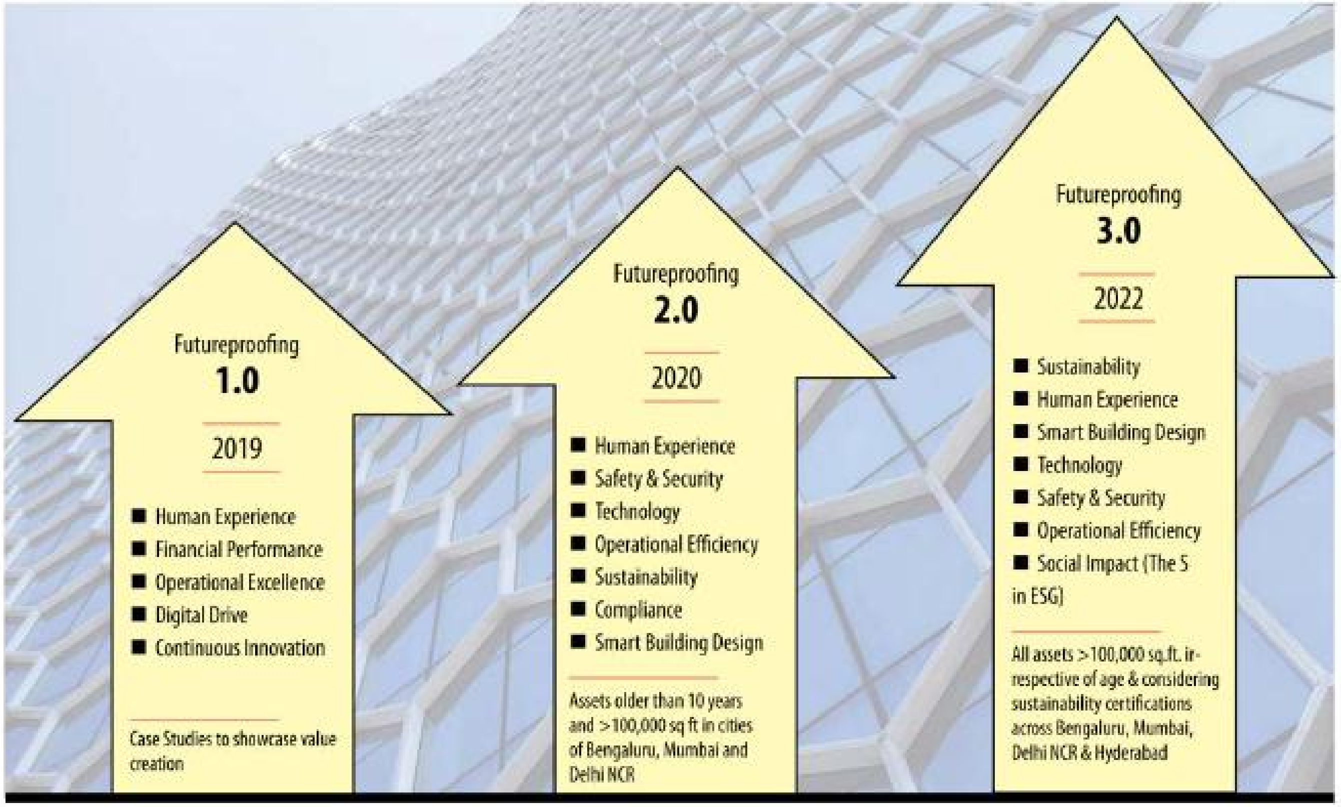
Office spaces like Nucleus Office Parks, a Blackstone Company, consistently invests in upgrading their buildings on environment and safety and benchmarks itself with global standards through certifications like Leadership in Energy and Environment Design (LEED), British Safety Council, GRESB, WELL etc.

Interesting office trends have emerged in recent times: While designers and architects are designing green pods

for those who prefer working from home, ergonomically curated, biophilic office designs are increasing. However, the two trends are acting against each other – while the former promotes a hybrid work culture, the latter indicates a re-entry to offices, giving way to a more collaborative workforce. As the opposing ideas continue to thrive, there are common threads — workspaces are being designed to incorporate keeping in mind the well-being of the occupiers, and offices are getting equipped with a wide range of amenities. The impact is visible on the rent these offices demand.

The hotelisation of offices indicates the workplace transformation into a commercial space like a hotel. It treats tenants as valued guests and provides building occupants with the same quality of service as they would find in the hospitality sector.
And the hotelisation of the workspace is here to stay.

So what is changing?
The coronavirus has been a game-changer for offices. More than two years into the pandemic, workplace evolution has picked pace. Features like "plug and play" are offered to all. Access to a cafeteria or a cloud kitchen, tenants' lounges, coffee bar, parking, concierge, discount deals from local restaurants and shops, conference centre management, internal community events, fitness centre



Futureproofing
1.0
2019

- Human Experience
- Financial Performance
- Operational Excellence
- Digital Drive
- Continuous Innovation

Case Studies to showcase value creation

Futureproofing
2.0
2020

- Human Experience
- Safety & Security
- Technology
- Operational Efficiency
- Sustainability
- Compliance
- Smart Building Design

Assets older than 10 years and >100,000 sq ft in cities of Bengaluru, Mumbai and Delhi NCR

Futureproofing
3.0
2022

- Sustainability
- Human Experience
- Smart Building Design
- Technology
- Safety & Security
- Operational Efficiency
- Social Impact (The S in ESG)

All assets >100,000 sq.ft. irrespective of age & considering sustainability certifications across Bengaluru, Mumbai, Delhi NCR & Hyderabad and wellness classes, creation of green spaces, are all features of a Futureproofed 3.0 commercial asset.

Ergonomically designed workplaces with biophilic features are said to enhance the connectivity of building occupants with the natural environment through direct and indirect nature and space and place conditions, creating an open and collaborative environment that makes people feel welcome and energized to work.

Key factors

The way businesses approach real estate decisions is being reshaped by technological advancements, a more mobile workforce, and uncertain economic growth. Amidst the uncertainty, landlords like Nucleus Office Parks (a Blackstone Company) with over 21 million sq.ft spread across Mumbai, Bangalore, Ahmedabad, Chennai and NCR region, have realized that to improve tenant retention, command better rental values and create future-ready offices, they need to take a more service-oriented role. And occupiers continue to demand more flexible lease terms, better quality in-house services and enhanced offerings for well-rounded end-user experiences.

The impact

The trend is already impacting the design of commercial real estate (CRE). First, it has pushed landlords and occupiers towards better asset management practices. As a result, landlords now focus on getting the right set of services and designing a more open and collaborative workspace. Second, the trend has fundamentally spurred demand for quality offices. Siting the example of Nucleus Office Parks, they developed both old and new portfolios to meet the high demand of quality workspaces. Hence, with such initiatives various redevelopment projects have resurfaced, adding to Grade A supply of offices.

The Social Impact:

As per a recent report by a leading IPC – Jones Lang LaSalle (JLL), real estate has moved from an economic commodity definition to a responsible service offering that has the ability to positively impact society and communities by bringing an accretive change to its occupants experience with their build environment. Built environment also has a social commitment to its community by reducing its carbon footprint through sustainable sourcing while also supporting economic growth in its sphere of influence.

*Making a case for Futureproofing:

India's office stock has seen a quantum jump over the last decade – the Grade A office stock in India across the top 7 cities stands at 740 mn sq ft at the end of June 2022 and has grown by 44% over the past five years. Concurrently, a substantial 39.3% of this operational Grade A stock dates back to 2010 or earlier.

55.7% of operational Grade A stock in India has no sustainability certifications. Given that upgrading to green certi-

fications will form a key part of a buildings' future proofing initiatives, asset owners will need to factor in the costs for such upgrades as well.

With the rapidly transforming real estate landscape, for operational buildings to remain relevant in the current context, upgradation is a critical tool. It is worth mentioning that many 'good to have' and 'aspirational' categorized upgrades have now become a 'must have' in an environment of change where decarbonizing real estate is as crucial as maintaining its economic value. Organizations like Nucleus Office Parks, used spaces outside their office parks (One Green Mile – on Lower Parel) to not only create an equal street for all but create community spaces under the flyover.

As the workforce and the occupiers demand climate – responsible real estate from the building owners and investors, green upgrades will be key drivers of asset value as well along with the physical upgrades.

Executive Summary

The top four cities – Begaluru, Mumbai, Delhi NCR and Hyderabad are the biggest office markets in India and account for 77% of India's Grade A office stock. They also contribute 79% of the cumulative gross leasing activity during 2018 – H1 2022 for the top seven cities.

Grade A Office Stock with upgradation* potential in top 4 cities

347 mn sq ft
(89% of this stock Is non-certified)

118.8 mn sq ft	**Begaluru**	INR 75.9 billion
85.8 mn sq ft	**Mumbai**	INR 70.1 billion
180.0 mn sq ft	**Delhi NCR**	INR 54.7 billion
162.8 mn sq ft	**Hyderabad**	INR 33.1 billion

Investment Potential across 4 cities

NR 233.8 bn
(Green certified stock Accounts for <10% of the Potential capex spend)

*Upgradation includes both age, services and amenities related upgrades as well as green upgrades required for the entire operational Grade A stock across the cities considered

*(Executive Summary Infographic by JLL). *JLL India report November 2022.*

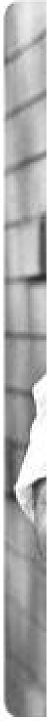
By JAI ARJUN SINGH

Writer, critic

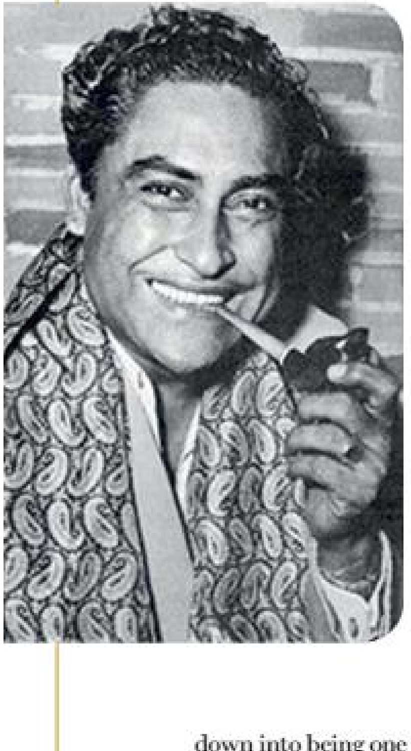
Full of Character

Prince or pauper, intense or flighty, silent or singing, the Hindi film hero acted out a rainbow life. A pick of the best

Balraj Sahni



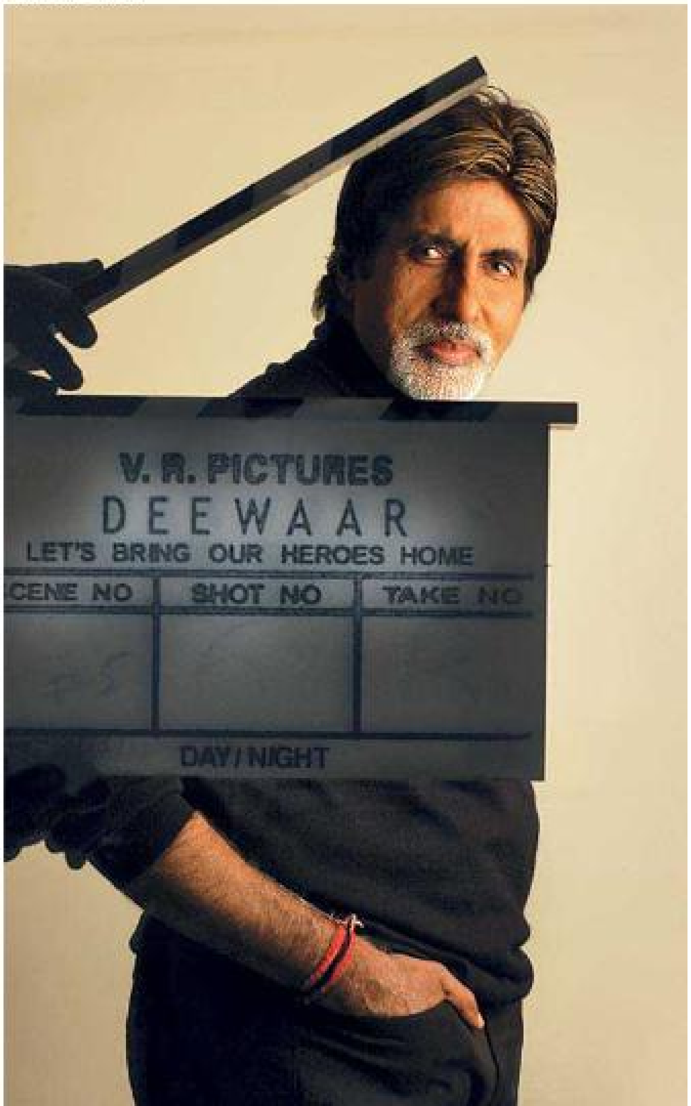
His farmer-turned-rickshaw puller adrift in the big city (*Do Bigha Zamin*, 1953)—infinitely graceful in pain—became a touchstone of film acting. A light effortlessness with the spoken word combined with the method actor's rigour in how he got under a character's skin, from *Dharti Ke Lal* (1946) to his great swansong as the patriarch in *Garm Hava* (1973), magisterial and vulnerable at once. In between came scores of roles, not always as leading men but always bringing gravitas and depth—as well as occasional playfulness, as in the early sequences of *Waqt* (1965).



Ashok Kumar

By 1947, Ashok Kumar had already been a star—Hindi cinema's first male star—for years, and was about to see a pivotal new generation take over. He lingered as protagonist, and as a significant presence in films like *Bandini* (1963) or the handful built around a trio with Pradeep Kumar-Meena Kumari. But for decades, 'Dada Moni' retained a vital relevance as a character actor, occasionally stretching himself in edgier or more central roles in, say, *Jewel Thief* (1967) or *Aashirwad* (1968), then settled down into being one of our best-loved grandfatherly figures. None of that erases the young Ashok—the accidental 25-year-old hero of *Achhut Kanya* (1936), the slick hipster of *Kismet* (1943) and many other B&W classics, producer at Bombay Talkies, mentor and friend to younger talents.

BANDEEP SINGH



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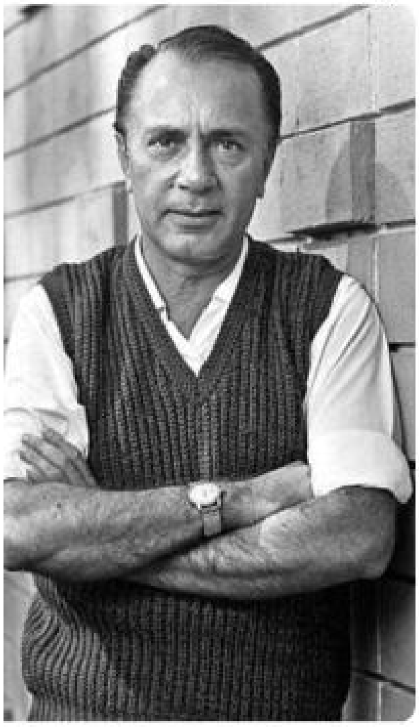


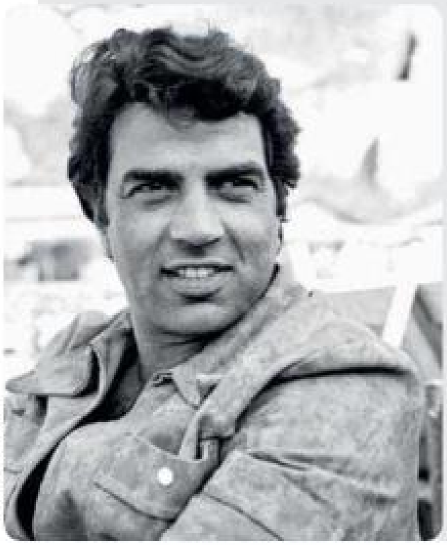
Shammi Kapoor

An unconventional choice perhaps, but Shammi—'the Indian Elvis'—is a refreshing change from the studied naturalism of the first three names. The first actor who danced with real aplomb and lack of inhibition, showing the way to later generations, his flamboyance was a perfect fit for the Eastmancolor era, with its escapist hill-station stories and frothy musicals. In his finest moments, Shammi erases the line between 'serious acting' and 'having fun', showing they can be the same thing.

Amitabh Bachchan

It's widely acknowledged that Bachchan could do anything well, from goofy comedy to the entire gamut of anger—from intense and slow-burning to explosive. No Hindi actor had ever done it this way before, and only a few can even in today's edgier, more 'realistic' cinema. Also notable were the professional standards he set, being one of the only male actors of his time who was unfailingly punctual for a shoot, and immersing himself in as many areas of his craft as possible. He was a terrific 'song actor' too, infrequently, but memorably, lapsing into song himself. His reinvention in the past two decades, though not as appreciated, has brought some fine performances (*Khakee*, 2004; *Cheeni Kum*, 2007; *Te3n*, 2016).

Dharmendra



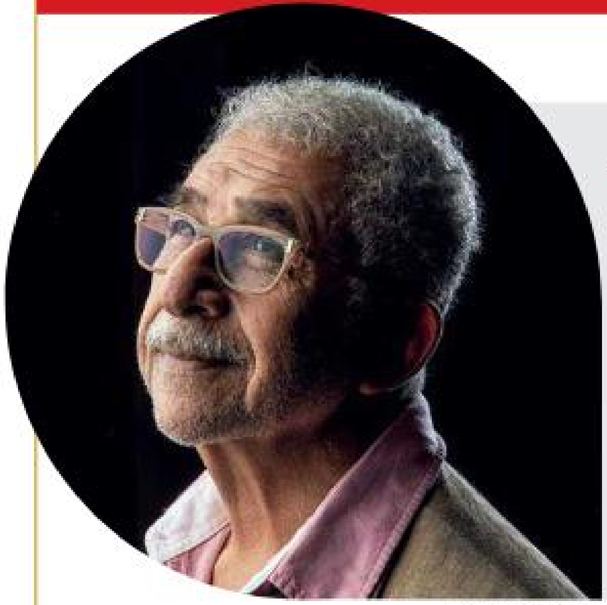
INDIA PICTURE

Of all the actors here, Dharmendra may be the one most dependent on a good director with faith in his ability to fill out a role. Sadly, not enough of them had that—Dharam's own self-deprecation comes across as honest. Watch him in the human-scaled films of Hrishikesh Mukherjee (*Satyakam*, 1969; *Chupke Chupke*, 1975) or amid the sprawling landscapes of J.P. Dutta, who gave him some of his meatiest latter-day roles (*Ghulami*, 1985; *Hathyar*, 1989). He's one of our finest comic artistes too—notwithstanding the snarling he-man persona—and it's astonishing his Veeru in *Sholay* (1975) was under-appreciated for so long.

Dilip Kumar

It has long been a cliché to think of Dilip Kumar as the actor's actor, as the performer who everyone—viewers, peers—imitated or was in awe of. What has been less obvious to the casual movie buff is that in addition to being such a powerful, reflective actor, Kumar could be a dashing star too, unafraid to show off a magnetic personality, whether in the Errol Flynn vein (*Aan*, 1952) or as a comic performer (*Kohinoor*, 1960; *Leader*, 1964). His great tragic parts in films like *Devdas* (1955) and *Deedar* (1951) or the quiet burn of *Mughal-E-Azam* (1960) cast a lingering shadow, though, even on his latter-day roles opposite much younger actors.

INDIA PICTURE



BANDEEP SINGH

Naseeruddin Shah

Versatile, intelligent, the anchoring in theatre bringing a laser-focus on his craft, Naseer came at just the right time to be the perfect man for the "parallel" films of Shyam Benegal, Saeed Mirza, Govind Nihalani, Ketan Mehta and others. With recent print restorations, we have been able to rediscover some of his outstanding, less-seen work, such as the narcissistic Raja in *Bhavni Bhavai* (1980). Despite his disdain for the mainstream, he had an amusing if uneven career there, having a rollicking good time in films like *Jalwa* (1987), *Tridev* (1989) and *Krrish* (2006).

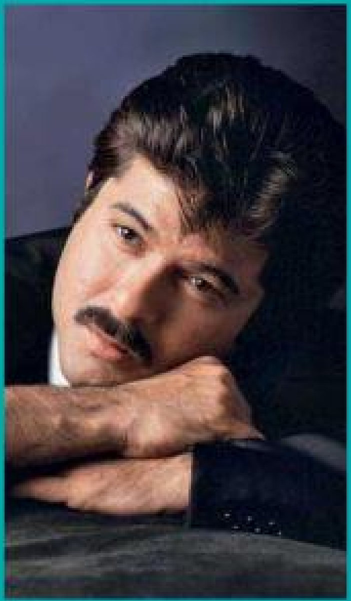
INDIA PICTURE

Irrfan Khan

The "what could have been" question will always haunt our thoughts of Irrfan—who departed much too young in 2020—but the consolation will have to be that the "what is" still burns like a spectacular fire. Throughout his career, Irrfan kept raising the bar for powerful, internalised acting, from his best homegrown roles (*Maqbool*, 2004; *The Namesake*, 2006; *Paan Singh Tomar*, 2012; *The Lunchbox*, 2013) to international productions like *Life of Pi* (2012). But he also showed an ability to throw himself wholeheartedly into massy escapism—watch the otherwise dull *Jazbaa* (2015) for his marvellous wisecracking-action-hero turn.

Anil Kapoor

One of those so easy to take for granted, though there has been appreciation of late for his fitness well into his 60s! But think about it and you'll realise how much he has meant to two or more generations of viewers, and what a range of iconic or loved films he has enlivened: from '80s outings (Chameli ki Shaadi, Mr India, Tezaab) all the way to his comic turn in No Entry (2005), the rakish patriarch in Dil Dhadakne Do (2015), the self-lacerating AK vs AK (2020).



INDIA PICTURE

Manoj Bajpayee

Versatility is a quality often over-emphasised, but it can be breathtaking when an actor truly pulls it off. Look no further than Bajpayee's brawny, profane Sardar Khan in *Gangs of Wasseypur* (2012) being followed by his reticent, soft-spoken characters in *Aligarh* (2015) and *Bhonsle* (2018, barely speaking here). After his defining early work (*Satya*, 1998; *Kaun?*, 1999), he was out in the wilderness for a while but recovered to make a strong comeback in both films and in web series (*The Family Man*, 2019–). Many career highlights perchance lie ahead.

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THE BEST OF INDIA

SONGS TO LISTEN TO

By **AVARNA JAIN**
Vice-chairperson, Saregama

MUSIC TO MY EARS

A millennial sets out to list the film songs that have left the hearts of her generation aflutter

INDIA PICTURE

INDIA PICTURE

H

How do you encompass the musical journey of a culture in 1,000 words? The sheer magnitude of Indian music is overwhelming, instrumental as it has been in reflecting our society's hopes and feelings. Indeed, it has been the purest form of unadulterated glee and lasting melancholia.

Let's start with the now. If there is someone who understands the global impact of music, it's Karan Johar. Not since Rahman's *Slumdog Millionaire* has a soundtrack, or in the case of *Brahmastra*, the song ***'Kesariya'***, made such an impact on the global music charts. It's a no-brainer that this legacy of hit soundtracks will continue with *Rocky and Rani ki Prem Kahani*.

Speaking of legacies, post-pandemic, Sanjay Leela Bhansali's *Gangubai Kathiawadi* set the standard on what to expect in larger-than-life musical scores. ***'Dholida'*** was an instant hit showcasing the vibrant Alia Bhatt in all her glory. Singer Jahnvi Shrimankar outdoes herself in this blend of Hindi and Gujarati cultures.

The past decade saw some excruciatingly confusing times, but it had its moments. Throwback to 2013, and it's now 10 years since Arijit Singh enthralled us with ***'Tum hi ho'***, showing the audience how a voice could evoke a plethora of emotions. A beautifully crafted song by the genius Mithoon, who wrote and composed the song. Arijit has been a revelation, from *'Tum hi ho'* to *'Kesariya'*, he has probably created some important musical touchstones for this generation.

The boom of smartphones in the early 2000s ushered the way for India's very first viral song, ***'Why this kolaveri di'***. ***'Emosanal attyachar'*** became the love anthem of a broken-hearted generation while winning a national award at the same time. And Hrithik Roshan took the mantle from SRK to become India's heart-throb with *Kaho Naa...Pyaar Hai* with its euphoric and melancholic tunes. The title song, sung by Alka Yagnik and Udit Narayan and brilliantly composed by Rajesh Roshan, is played at parties even today after two decades.

For a millennial like me, the '90s are like a warm hug. From Indipop icon Alisha Chinai finding her perfect groom (***'Made in India'***) to Lucky Ali's ***'O Sanam'***, Vishal Bhardwaj's ***'Jungle jungle baat chali hai'*** waking us up every Sunday

1. Kishore Kumar, Asha Bhosle and R.D. Burman

2. Mohammed Rafi

3. Lata Mangeshkar in concert

INDIAN EXPRESS

FAWZAN HUSAIN

1. Raj Kapoor with Mukesh
2. Manna Dey

IN A GENIUS MOVE, PANCHAMDA GOT THE RECLUSIVE MANNA DEY TO SING THE SUPERCOOL '*AAO TWIST KAREIN*'

morning to Annu Kapoor's Friday night *Antakshari*. What a decade it was. Then came the two most iconic songs of that decade—'***Tujhe dekha toh ye jaana sanam***' from *Dilwale Dulhania Le Jayenge* (*DDLJ*) and '***Pehla nasha***' from *Jo Jeeta Wohi Sikandar*. They defined the way millennials understood love. *DDLJ* had the best of the old and new school coming together for the music of the film. So Kumar Sanu paired up with the legendary Lata Mangeshkar, and Anand Bakshi penned the lyrics, collaborating with the young hit duo Jatin-Lalit. It was a match made in heaven. It's no wonder that Lata Bua, as I fondly knew her, called on her way from the recording to say this song was a sureshot hit.

But the real milestone came in 1992 when Mani Ratnam walked into the backyard of a relatively unknown jingle composer. He had heard his work in a Titan Watches ad. Ratnam was surprised at how sophisticated the studio was and how young the composer. After a brief talk, he asked the young man to compose the music for his upcoming film, *Roja*. That young man was A.R. Rahman. The result was the epic '***Bharat humko jaan se pyaara hai***' (both the Tamil and Hindi version), which became the '***Aye mere watan ke logon***' of this generation.

The 1980s, for me, are undefinable as they are a potpourri of firsts. '***Mile sur mera tumhara***', along with the iconic '*Hamara Bajaj*' ad jingle, united a nation. A new wave of pop music hit the Indian shores with the introduction of Nazia Hassan. And the genius Bappida gave us the epic sounds of 'Disco'. There was something for everyone. And then there was the introduction of Jagjit Singh into the mainstream musical heart of India with '***Woh kagaz ki kashti***'. He introduced an entire generation to the soothing genre of ghazals.

The 1960s and the '70s were the swinging years for Indian music. The Pancham (R.D. Burman) and Gulzar express was in full flow with superhit albums such as *Ghar*, *Aandhi* and *Parichay*. Panchamda paired up with Anand Bakshi, who was initially against writing the song (but later got convinced by the charming Dev Anand) and shocked the nation with his rebellious anthem, '***Dum maaro dum***'. Soon, Asha Bhosle began ruling the charts as the voice of a new generation. In another instance involving Panchamda's genius, he took the reclusive Manna Dey out of his comfort zone to sing the supercool '***Aao twist karein***'. Meanwhile, in Bengal, during a recording session, the legendary Salil Chowdhury pointed to a young sessions guitarist and said he would become one of India's best composers. That guitarist's name was Ilaiyaraaja.

A stroke of luck gave Kishoreda an opportunity to sing for superstar Rajesh Khanna in *Kati Patang* when (Mohammed) Rafi saab walked away from the project. We all know what happened after. Although Kishoreda won the Filmfare award for the song, '***Yeh jo mohabbat hai***', from the same film, '***Yeh shaam...***' has this magical aura around it that only gets better by the year.

S.D. Burman hit a home run with *Guide*, whose narrative-driven soundtrack gave us gems such as '***Din dhal jaaye***', '***Aaj phir jeene ki tamanna hai***' and '***Wahan kaun hai tera***'. Shailendra's pen performed the perfect coup de grâce with the evergreen '***Gaata***

rahe mera dil', a song personifying the endless optimism lovers harbour no matter what the circumstances. The Kishore-Lata combination catapulted this amazing song into a classic.

But what really pinned Indian music to the world map was the performance of M.S. Subbulakshmi at the UN General Assembly in 1966. Historic, iconic, you can use any adjective here, and it will still fall short in explaining how important this moment was for India and its music.

And like a classic flashback, we now reach the end where we talk about the beginning. An era where colours were unseen and music would shape the future. Released on Independence Day in 1957, *Naya Daur* remains one of the top 10 highest-grossing Indian films of all time. O.P. Nayyar literally introduced a *naya daur* of music with the timeless, percussion driven '*Ude jab jab zulfein teri*'. Penned by the brilliant Sahir Ludhianvi and sung by Rafi and a then relatively unknown Asha Bhosle, this song was the heart of the film. I wonder how Madhubala, who was initially cast as the lead, would have danced on this track. Nevertheless, Vyjayanthimala made this song her own. In incandescent acts elsewhere, Geeta Dutt mesmerised audiences with her hypnotic voice, Rafi Saab drove the voice of Shammi Kapoor on the silver screen, Satyajit Ray gave birth to the world-renowned *Pather Panchali* with its iconic theme music and Naushad composed the soundtrack of *Baiju Bawra* and introduced Hindustani classical music to the mainstream.

There are two other pivotal milestones from this era which for me are probably the most important pieces of Indian music history from the past 75 years. '*Mera joota hai Japani*', the song current younglings know from films such as *Deadpool* or *Gravity*, has some history that is even more compelling. The stars aligned, and brought together five unique individuals—Raj Kapoor, singer Mukesh, music director duo Shankar-Jaikishan and lyricist Shailendra. Never in the history of Indian music had such a super team been formed. It was the first Indian song to gain global popularity, all the way from the Soviet Union to the United States of America.

The second milestone is the discovery of Lata Mangeshkar. '*Aayega aanewaala*' still remains the song that defines Madhubala. Penned by Nakhshab Jarchavi and hauntingly composed by Khemchand Prakash, this song made Lata Mangeshkar a household name. And when she sang '*Aye mere watan ke logon*' against the backdrop of the Sino-Indian wWar, an entire nation cried. Lata Mangeskar is the true voice of this nation. History has been kind to Indian music. May the melodies never stop playing in our heads and in our lives. ■

A TOP 10 PLAYLIST

- *Dholida* **(Gangubai Kathiawadi, 2022)**
- *Tum hi ho* **(Aashiqui 2, 2013)**
- *Kaho naa pyar hai* **(Kaho Naa... Pyaar Hai, 2000)**
- *Tujhe dekha toh yeh jaana sanam* **(DDLJ, 1995)**
- *Dum maaro dum* **(Hare Rama Hare Krishna, 1971)**
- *Yeh sham mastani* **(Kati Patang, 1971)**
- *Gata rahe mera dil* **(Guide, 1965)**
- *Uden jab jab zulfen teri* **(Naya Daur, 1957)**
- *Mera joota hai japani* **(Awara, 1951)**
- *Aayega aanewala* **(Mahal, 1949)**

FROM '*TUM HI HO* TO '*KESARIYA*', ARIJIT SINGH HAS CRAFTED MUSICAL TOUCHSTONES FOR THIS GENERATION

GJEPC
INDIA

INDIAN GEM & JEWELLERY INDUSTRY PREPARING FOR THE BIG LEAP!

The Indian gem and jewellery industry has, with the support of the Government, set itself an ambitious target of $75 billion in exports by 2030 from around $40 billion at present. Vipul Shah, Chairman, GJEPC, gives an overview of the current scenario and the amibitious future-forward plans that will help the gem and jewellery industry catapult to greater heights.

With a firm grasp of ground realities at the grassroot level, the GJEPC, on behalf of the industry, is striving to turn this dream into a reality through cohesive organisation, by linking all arms of the mammoth sector towards the common goal through purposeful action.

Thanks to the Government for introducing trade-friendly policies that has helped us to become a USD 40 billion dollar industry today. What got you here won't take you there! Even the Government understands this and it has been constantly reviewing and coming up with reforms that will sustain India's leadership position globally.

The industry is working in alignment with Hon'ble Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision of 'Aatmanirbhar Bharat' – making India a global manufacturing hub. The gem and jewellery industry has already achieved this to an extent, but the untapped growth potential is huge.

The recently forged foreign trade agreements between India and countries such as UAE and Australia

VIPUL SHAH, Chairman GJEPC

have accelerated our export momentum by giving India's gem and jewellery exporters preferential access to these markets and their neighbouring regions. The Government is in the process of finalising similar trade deals with important Western markets like the UK and Canada.

GJEPC believes that the 'Made in India' tag for jewellery must become as coveted as the 'Made in Switzerland' tag for luxury watches or the 'Made in Germany' tag for high-end cars. We have embarked on this mission on multiple fronts.

The 360-degree approach for growing the country's share of the global pie requires frequent, high-quality interactions between Indian manufacturers and overseas retailers. The Council, for the past few decades, has been maintaining a prominent Indian presence at all the major international exhibitions through India Pavilions, and has been organising its own events like country-specific Buyer-Seller Meets, India Global Connect and the International Gem & Jewellery Show (IGJS) Dubai & Jaipur that are meant exclusively for foreign buyers.

IGJS is a curated exhibition with a global focus, offering top-quality 'Made in India' jewellery exclusively to international buyers. Conceptualised during the pandemic, the India Global Connect e-meetings have served to enhance trade relationships between Indian manufacturers and top retailers from 16 countries such as the UK, Colombia, Switzerland, Angola, Oman, Singapore, Morocco, Saudi Arabia, UAE, Hong Kong, Qatar, Thailand, Lebanon, Egypt, Malaysia and Mexico. GJEPC organises India Pavilions at all major international gem & jewellery shows including JCK, Hong Kong, Jewellery Arabia, etc. The India Jewellery Exposition (IJEX) in Dubai, too, is another global business touchpoint, fashioned as a year-round exhibition space to connect with international buyers.

Keeping an eye on the future, these industry promotions are backed by large-scale investments in infrastructure and facilities, namely, the India Jewellery Park Mumbai and the Mega Common Facility Centre (CFC) in SEEPZ.

India Jewellery Park Mumbai will be the first-of-its-kind integrated gem and jewellery industrial park with manufacturing units, commercial areas, residences for industrial workers, and commercial support services. It is expected to attract investments of over ₹40,000 crore and create employment opportunities for over 1 lakh workers.

The ₹70-crore Mega CFC in SEEPZ in Mumbai is one of the key projects initiated by the Commerce Ministry, under the leadership of Shri Piyush Goyal, with GJEPC as the nodal body for running of the project. Shri Piyush Goyal has also supported the investment of ₹200 crore for sprucing up the entire manufacturing eco-system of SEEPZ-SEZ.

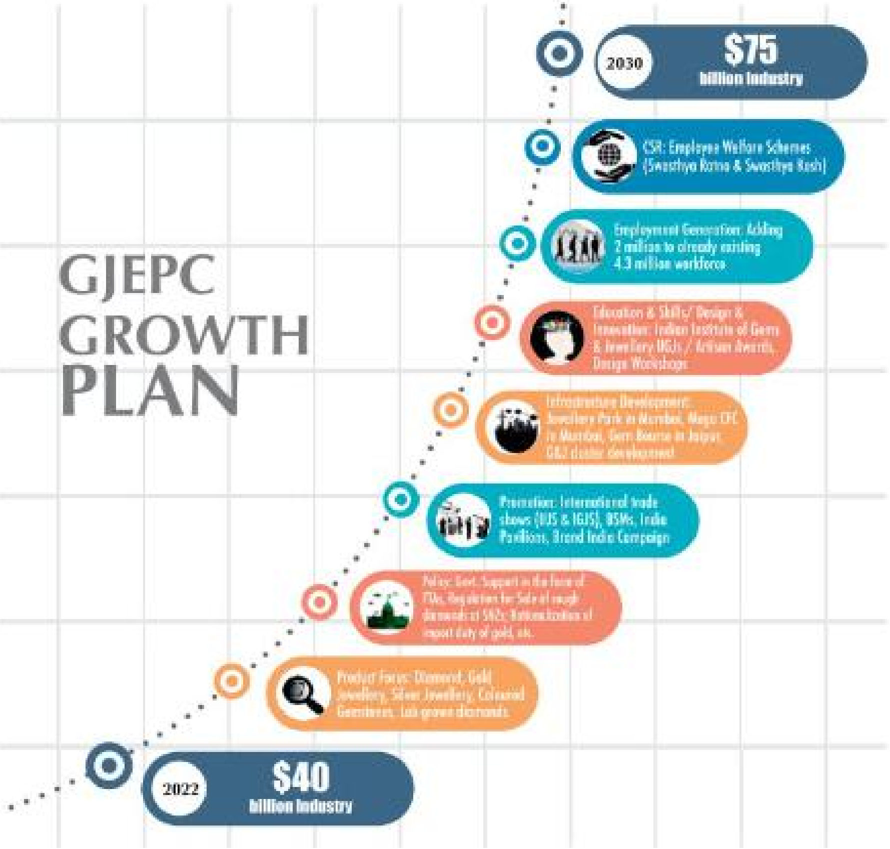
Along with the Council's sharp focus on growth, it spearheads a number of philanthropic initiatives. 'Jewellers For Hope' supports charities involved in activities such as spreading education and uplifting those on the margins of society. GJEPC's health-related initiatives - Swasthya Ratna and Swasthya Kosh - offer quality health care of choice to all gem and jewellery workers. The Parichay Card, apart from giving every unattached worker an official identity, will provide social security services in the future.

Skilling and Education are a key component of the Council's investment in the future by establishing the Indian Institute of Gems & Jewellery (IIGJ) across India.

Aligning with the Govt.'s Districts as Export Hubs and One District One Product schemes, GJEPC is also fast-tracking Cluster Development in the 390 districts identified as clusters in the NCAER report.

The leap in export numbers would require a leap in design thinking as well. In this respect, the Council is spearheading design initiatives such as The Artisan Awards, workshops/masterclasses with top designers, and trend-forecasting seminars and books that provide the industry with greater exposure to cutting-edge concepts and innovation in design.

The gathering forces of the supercharged Indian gem and jewellery industry are aligning in the pursuit of forming an unrivalled manufacturing ecosystem that is future-ready and capable of making great strides.


GJEPC
GROWTH
PLAN
2030
$75
billion Industry
CSR: Employee Welfare Schemes (Swasthya Ratna & Swasthya Kosh)
Employment Generation: Adding 2 million to already existing 4.3 million workforce
Education & Skills/ Design & Innovation: Indian Institute of Gems & Jewellery IIGJs / Artisan Awards, Design Workshops
Infrastructure Development: Jewellery Park in Mumbai, Mega CFC in Mumbai, Gem Bourse in Jaipur, G&J cluster development
Promotion: International trade shows (IIJS & IGJS), BSMs, India Pavilions, Brand India Campaign
Policy: Govt. Support in the form of FTAs, Regulation for Sale of rough diamonds at SNZs, Rationalization of import duty of gold, etc.
Product Focus: Diamond, Gold Jewellery, Silver Jewellery, Coloured Gemstones, Lab grown diamonds.
2022
$40
billion Industry

एमएमआरडीए
MMRDA

MTHL TO ENSURE EAST-WEST CONNECTIVITY IN MMR REGION, CREATE 7 NEW GROWTH CENTRES

The ambitious Metro Project has an ambitious target to commission (read public dedication of) fully networked north-east-west-south (NEWS) corridor as a new year's gift for western suburbs of Mumbai. Around 18 months back Mumbai Metropolitan Regional Development Authority (MMRDA) Commissioner SVR Srinivas, took up the challenge, taking recourse to a laser focussed hands-on-working-style following strict timelines, mandating professionalism of all stakeholders while closely ensuring cost curtailment through lump sum tendering.

Impact Today: Your effort for tangible outcomes on Metro corridors? Any immediate results to show for the same?

SVRS: The recent inauguration of the Y road corridor in Thane by honourable Chief Minister Eknath Shinde is there to see. We are constructing an elevated road to connect to the other side of Thane that now depends on the Mumbra bypass, a highly congested experience. We will complete a six kilometre long elevated road by 2023 so motorists go directly to Mumbra and Thane and even Dombivli. The Thane-Belapur Road is greatly underrated for the serious value it will bring to the transport corridor there.

Similarly, the MTHL six lane freeway road bridge is much more than just a marvel of construction. It will majorly impact the economic growth of the entire MMR region. Tenders will come out soon to connect the MTHL at Chirle to the Mumbai-Pune expressway. We will soon call for bids to ensure inter-connectivity.

The MTHL project is not just a transportation project but will lead to Local Economic Development (LED) of the entire region and national and state level economic growth. Mumbai is known as an island city, but only till the end of next year when travel time on the Navi Mumbai-Nariman Point corridor of MTHL will be a mere 12 minutes as against two hours road travel it takes now. It will then be like traversing between Nariman Point and Worli. Even travel time between Pedder Road and Bandra currently takes 20 minutes.

The MTHL will release the island city of Mumbai from constraints of being a north-south linear transportation corridor. MTHL has a target to commission for public dedication by the end of next year. Thereafter, all movement of logistics including labour, raw material, finished products, government staffers and general public that was north-southerly for centuries will switch to an east-westerly route. A massive hinterland will become open to us. Travel time will come down through huge time saves down to a 10-to-12-minute radius that will become a reality.

The development of south Mumbai, with thousands of cessed buildings over a century old will also be greatly benefitted. Once the MTHL connectivity happens, upkeep and renewal of these buildings will organically follow, which has been a debacle for years. As you pointed out, CSMT railway station was constructed 100 years ago and still efficiently caters to the population growth seamlessly. South Mumbai will also come into its own once the MTHL corridor unleashes its developmental potential.

Shri. S. V.R. Srinivas, IAS, Addl. Chief Secretary and Metropolitan Commissioner, MMRDA

What about the MMR region, given the fact that even new development areas like Kharghar are already saturated? Also given the urban: rural population demography ratio of 60:40 per cent.

SVRS: Very good point. We first prepared the regional plan for MMR for the next 20 years. Considering all ongoing developments including the MTHL and Metro, we have identified seven potential growth centres that will emerge in and around the MTHL. The potential for future multimodal corridors was also factored into the plan.

The MMR region defies population demographics existing in India and enjoys a 90:10 urban: rural ratio. It is the most urbanised agglomeration in India with a 122 million population which is still very good with its own plus points. Currently 200 families migrate to Mumbai every day.

The Metro project timelines and public dedication.

SVRS: Our Metro master plan envisages a 337 kms network spread with 80 per cent completion over the next 2.5 to 3 years. Of these, eight lines are under active construction spanning 150 kms including underground and elevated corridors. This involves a lot of effort in terms of rehabilitation and resettlement of PAPs despite maintaining timelines. The first aspect is right of way (ROW). Secondly, environmental clearances and permissions are needed as the metro passes through sensitive ecosystems. Even if we do not encounter sensitive corridors, we still need clearances. Thirdly is the issue of land acquisition. Only after these three are taken care can project attention be shifted to technical challenges which are crucial but only after the three priority areas are sorted. This is where our focus lies.

The ROW issue is specific. Thus far, the delay of the Metro depots over various reasons was the challenge. Now, the depot for line 3 is finalized and after some amount of delay we achieved closure on the two depots concerning five lines. For line 4 the depot is finalised in Thane district's Mogharpada while for line 5 we have finalised Kasheli. We have already floated bids for both depots. Now, three lines will be commissioned and dedicated to the public even as their depots are simultaneously completed. Other works are ongoing parallelly.

We changed the line 4 contractor as it was not progressing. We have appointed another subcontractor and work has picked up on this line too, being the longest one, extending from Wadala to Thane and beyond. Including 4A, it is about 35 kms. The previous contractor was underperforming in terms of mobilising technical manpower and physical resources. After I joined up, I set some time limits and when this did not happen we made a decision. Decisions must be taken when they are relevant. The same decision may not be useful, say, one-and-a-half-years later and serve no purpose. The delay would have happened by then. Delays lead to more delays and in turn, further delays. With these two depots finalized three to four lakh commuters are assured. Mogharpada will service the 4 and 4A lines while line five will be looked after by the Kasheli depot. Line 10 will also be serviced by these two depots. A substantial number of four metro lines will be catered to by just these two depots. That's why I mentioned the importance of ROW way earlier.

For ensuring timelines on work decision making and constant monitoring is essential. I introduced a system of weekly reports. As you rightly said, work on the Metro is ongoing 24/7. Even at midnight or 3 am you can observe the ongoing work at Metro sites. I get weekly outcome based reports reaching me directly from the field and in case of shortfalls, I am right on top of it, be it construction or R&R issues, depot related or manpower and material challenges.

This issue had also cropped up during the work on line 2A and phase one of line 7 which were commissioned and people worked hard, 24/7, till public dedication in April 2022. We are now targeting phase two of two lines to be commissioned by January 2023 as a new year's gift. This will ensure the western suburbs are covered and for the first time an entire Metro network will be fully functional. Lines 2A and 7 will connect to line 1 at two different points at DN Nagar on line 2A and the other at Andheri for line 7. Goregaon metro will connect to the Oshiwara suburban station.

DCM Devendra Fadnavis' vision was for a seamless public commute across multiple public transport corridors using one smart ticket.

SVRS: Our target is seamless travel across public transport corridors even beyond Metro. Only today I held a meeting on this. An integrated network is the most important feature of our plan. We have written to the Railways for seamless connectivity for Metro passengers on the suburban rail systems and are also looking to make it BEST compatible.

There used to be a GOI issued smart card called the Mor card which invited parodies in a film that termed it as the No More card. Today, GOI has introduced the National Common Mobility Card (NCMC). While every public utility wants its own distinct card, Metro lines will be compatible with other modes and we are also considering inclusion of Intermediate public transport (IPT) providers like autorickshaws, taxis and also Uber and Ola to afford a comfortable and convenient passenger experience. Our card, which will be driven through handphone applications, will be ready in the next two months.

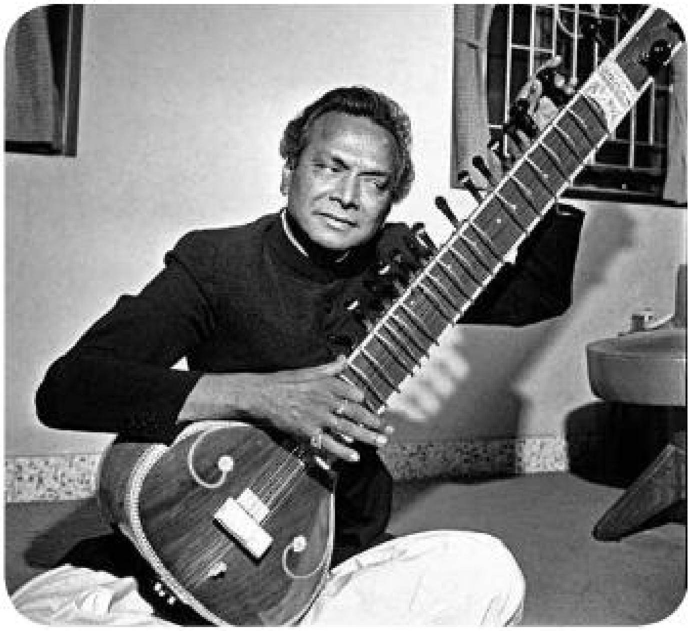
By **VARUN GROVER**

Lyricist, screenwriter and stand-up comedian

Master Suites

Film music is a species unto itself, and songs can have a great family resemblance regardless of context. So albums, or scores that lend a distinctive aura for a film, are treasures. Ten from a gilded vault

BCCL



Awaara

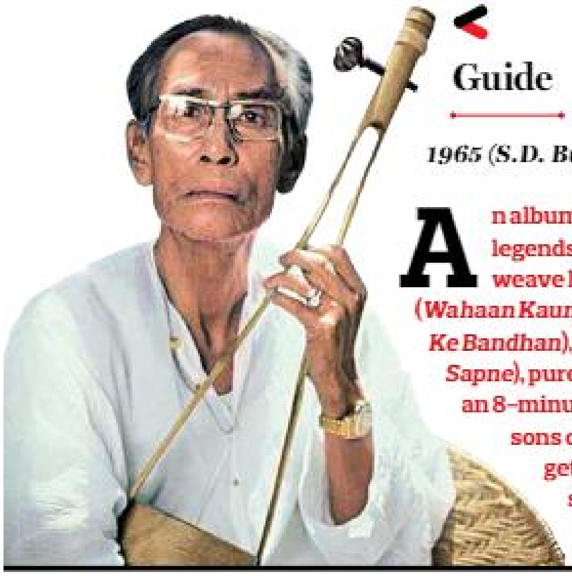
1951 (Shankar-Jaikishan)

It was early in Raj Kapoor's career, and only his second time working with Shankar-Jaikishan, but *Awaara* created a template for future soundtracks of this legendary collaboration. The title song penned by Shailendra, *Awaara Hoon*, established his trademark style—deep philosophical musings wrapped up in fun, simple, musical words. *Dum Bhar Jo Udhar Munh Phere*, *Ghar Aaya Mera Pardesi* and *Ab Raat Guzarne Waali Hai*, with their complex meters and melancholic, romantic moods, brought together an album with deep, haunting music.

Hum Dono

1961 (Jaidev)

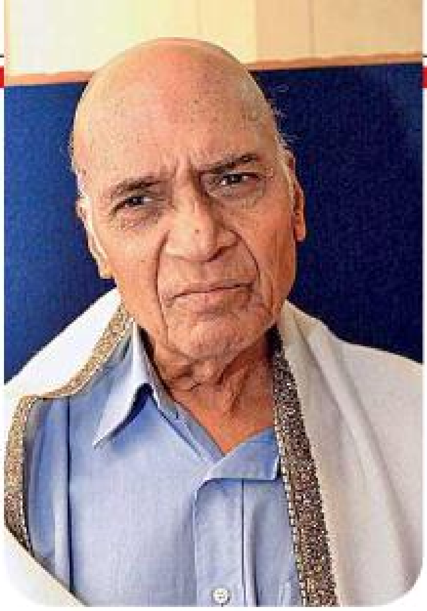
Jaidev is probably the most underrated genius in Hindi film music history, mainly because his work got lost in ordinary or low-budget parallel films few people cared for—*Jumbish, Gaman, Do Boond Paani* and *Gharonda* being cases in point. But the one time he scored for a big-budget film with big stars, he gave us gems like *Main Zindagi Ka Saath, Abhi Na Jaao* and Lata Mangeshkar's popular ode to secularism—the bhajan *Allah Tero Naam*—all penned by Sahir Ludhianvi, who was at the top of his craft.



Guide

1965 (S.D. Burman)

An album of great variety, crafted by legends. S.D. Burman and Shailendra weave ballads of existential longing (*Wahaan Kaun Hai Tera*), iconoclasm (*Tod Ke Bandhan*), togetherness (*Tere Mere Sapne*), pure abandon (*Gaata Rahe*) and an 8-minute medley following the seasons of the heart (*Piya Tose*). SDB gets both Kishore and Rafi to sing for Dev Anand. That both suit him is part of the magic.



Umrao Jaan

1981 (Khayyam)

As Asha Bhosle sings *Kab Mili Thi, Kahaan Bichhdi Thi*, you feel the pain of a lost home—even from an imagined world. That's the magic of Khayyam and Shahryar's truly sublime work for Muzaffar Ali's period drama. Khayyam has created many stunning albums—take *Raziya Sultan* or *Bazaar*. But *Umrao Jaan*, loaded with ghazals, thumris and even an Amir Khusro *bidaai geet* (*Kaahe Ko Byaahe Bides*), tops my list because of the way Asha helms an entire album hinging on a philosophical matrix of longing, love and heartbreak.

Baiju Bawra

1952 (Naushad)

Years before *Mughal-E-Azam*, Naushad saab gave us a blueprint on how to parlay Hindustani classical into film music. *Baiju Bawra*, where a village singer challenges the great Tansen of Akbar's court, offered just the canvas for such a transmuting. With lyricist Shakeel Badayuni, Naushad creates a magnum opus: 13 tracks, many of them raga-based, five sung by Ustad Amir Khan, two by Pt D.V. Paluskar, the rest by Rafi and Lata. A most ambitious album, from the formative years of film music, it's a prototype the genre sadly kept a distance from.

Masoom

1983 (R.D. Burman)

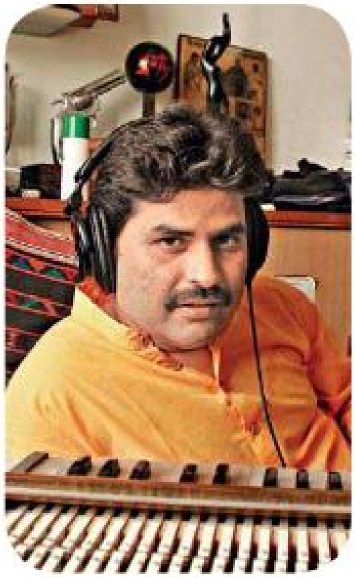
Anup Ghoshal, Vanita Mishra, Gurpreet Kaur and Aarti Mukherjee might not have instant recall in the minds of Hindi film music lovers but they created the soundtrack of my childhood with my favourite R.D. Burman-Gulzar album. Yes, the two have collaborated on at least 10 other great films, but to have Do Naina, Huzoor Iss Kadar *and* Lakdi Ki Kathi *segueing into an inherently non-musical film was truly a work of genius minds.*

Rangeela

1995 (A.R. Rahman)

Rahman's first original Hindi film score gives him a playground big enough to show his mastery and range. Mehboob's refreshing, unconventional lyrics complemented ARR's complex, auteur-level compositions to give us teens of the '90s a blood rush like nothing before. From the trippy, seductive theme music to Suresh Wadkar's brooding Pyaar Ye, Shweta Shetty-ARR's positively goofy Maangta Hai Kya, Swarnalatha's sinful Hai Raama and Asha's flighty groove in Tanha Tanha, the vibe and tempo shift with balletic elegance.

HEMANT PITHWA



BHASKAR PAUL

Maachis

1996 (Vishal Bhardwaj)

Vishal Bhardwaj arrived on the film music scene with an album that felt like a woollen quilt on a dark, wintry night. *Chappa Chappa* and *Chhod Aaye* became youth anthems. The five Lata Mangeshkar gems, all strung on the pain in her voice, go from elegiac to longing-filled. Gulzar saab's words (*Gori chatkori*, *Bhej kahaar*, *Ik andha kuaan*), adding depth and mood to an already smouldering album, made it a cult favourite of the '90s.

Oye Lucky! Lucky Oye!

2008 (Sneha Khanwalkar)

Sadly, the only female composer in this list—a statement on how patriarchal the music industry has been, and how difficult for women—Khanwalkar's debut score is the most innovative album of the past two decades. Fusion raginis (*Tu raja ki raaj dulari*), improvised folk (*Jugni*), rap (*Superchor*), and a conventional saucy bhangra (*Oye Lucky*) come together to not just elevate the cool quotient of Dibakar Banerjee's 2008 dramedy but mint an all-new film music aesthetic that Sneha went on to mine later.

GETTY IMAGES

Dev.D

2009 (Amit Trivedi)

Another debut, another home run. Amit Trivedi and Amitabh Bhattacharya (with Shellee, Anusha Mani and Shruti Pathak) collaborated on this Anurag Kashyap musical—the album, high on both style and substance, lists 18 tracks! The high points, of course, are *Emosanal Atyachaar* and *Saali Khushi*, both cutting deep into the persecution complex-ridden youth psyche of the times. Tracks like *Payaaliya* (written and sung by Shruti Pathak), *Dhol Yaara Dhol* and *Maahi Nainu* (both written by Shellee) add a strong folk-fusion dimension to a soundtrack that careens playfully from Dixieland to edgier tones.

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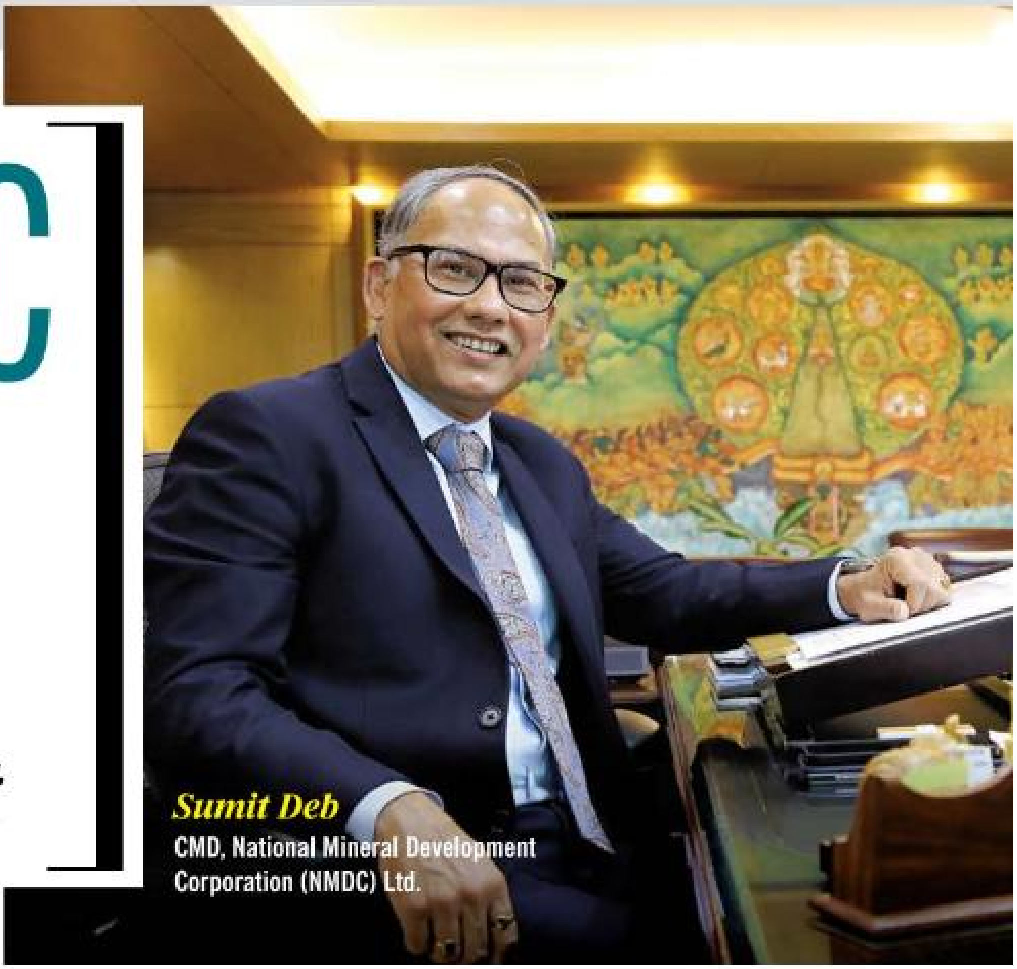
NMDC

Surging Ahead with an Iron Fist



Sumit Deb

CMD, National Mineral Development Corporation (NMDC) Ltd.

> *The growth trajectory of our performance in the last quarter has been exceptional and displays NMDC's commitment towards a self-sufficient nation by setting new benchmarks.*

Overseeing a Rs. 6000 crore expansion plan to increase production to 100 million tonnes by 2030 from 42 million tonnes as of today is, by no means, an easy task. And that's why the man steering the country's largest public sector iron ore producer National Mineral Development Corporation (NMDC) Ltd, Hyderabad, for over two years now is important. Chairman and MD Sumit Deb is touted to be bullish on expansion. The increased production will be in line with the government's plan for 300 million tonnes National Steel capacity, promised Deb.

Around two and half years ago, Sumit Deb took charge of NMDC as CMD, a Navratna PSU headquartered in Hyderabad, which is strategically located close to the rich mineral belt of the country extending to states like Odisha, Karnataka, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand and Telangana. It was a time when he had to wrestle his way into the renewal of mining leases in states. All this while simultaneously working on a Rs. 6,000 crore capacity expansion plan. Unfortunately for Deb, the pandemic, along with inclement weather conditions, proved to be major hurdles slowing down mobility, production and progress. Bailadila in Chhattisgarh and Donimalai in Karnataka, two of the largest mines of the sector, were worst affected during monsoon. Moreover, the demand for steel was tepid, impacting iron ore production to a large extent.

Earlier this year, the government had imposed 15% duty on flat steel and alloys, 50% on all grades of iron ore and 45% on pellets. While Deb insists that NMDC has not been exporting as a matter of policy of the Government of India and that the organization wants to see that the ore is available for domestic markets, online stock-trading platform Motilal Oswal suggests that reduction in steel production post the imposition of export duty on steel and pellets led to sharp correction in sales in H1 of FY23. However Deb is confident that

the prices are stable and there is an upward trend.

That's not all. Deb is confident about demand too. With the government's Rs. 7.5 lakh crore capital expenditure plan underway, NMDC chairman believes that iron ore is linked to steel demand, which, in turn, is linked to GDP that is projected to grow at 7%.

With recession fears looming large in the US and China slowing down due to the real estate crisis, production cuts could help Indian manufacturers, stressed Deb.

Deb acknowledges the fact that NMDC's growth has plateaued. Initially, it was a great run for the organization during the post-Covid commodity super cycle clocking a consolidated net profit of Rs. 3186 crore in Q1 FY22, rising six times from Rs. 531 crore in Q1 FY21.

Deb's milestones speak volumes about his cumulative experience covering a wide spectrum of departmental responsibilities. After graduating in mechanical engineering from Orissa University of Agriculture and Technology, his 3-decade journey inspires every industrialist. Bearing testimony to this are the several accolades that he has earned, including the Business Leader of the Year Award 2021 (PSU Sector) from World CSR Congress. Deb has set his eyes on steering this largest iron ore producer of India to greater heights. And he is sure to tide over challenging times too.

Profitability and Growth

Crossing the 42 million tonne milestone, NMDC also delivered the company's best ever annual financial results in FY22. During that fiscal, NMDC paid the highest ever dividend of Rs. 14.74 per share which works out to a 46% payout against an EPS of Rs. 32.07. The CMD said that NMDC has achieved record-breaking growth in FY22 on the back of a propelling expansion and investment strategy, and the company is entering the new fiscal with a valuable head start.

To improve profitability, NMDC's investments have focused on expanding mining capacity, beneficiation facilities and laying slurry pipelines. The slurry pipeline from Bailadila to Visakhapatnam is slated to be completed by 2024 with a total investment of Rs. 6,000 crore. This is done with an intention to reduce NMDC's dependence on railways.

The corporation currently operates a 1.2 MTPA mine-head pellet plant at Donimalai and a 2 MTPA pellet plant at Nagarnar is under construction. A 3 MTPA integrated steel plant at Nagarnar is at an advanced stage of construction and is likely to be commissioned shortly.

The goal now is set - better FY22 numbers with a 10% increase in annual production. This means FY23 will see 46-47 million tonnes (mt). In FY22, NMDC earned a revenue of Rs. 25,882 crore, a 68% increase year on year. PAT has also grown 50% to reach Rs. 9,398 crore. NMDC is hot-rolling towards a 100 MnT mining capacity by 2030.

Incorporated in 1958 as a Government of India public enterprise, NMDC has been involved in the exploration of a wide range of minerals including copper, rock phosphate, limestone, magnesite, diamond, tungsten and beach sands amongst others in some of the most remote corners of the country. NMDC's strength lies in exploration and mining of iron ore for the country. Leveraging the Australian subsidiary, Legacy, with 21 mining tenements, NMDC is keen to tap the export markets for low grade iron-ore. This low-cost producer of iron ore also operates the only mechanized diamond mine in India at Panna, Madhya Pradesh.

The Mining Major has recently obtained a mining lease to start gold mining operations at Chigargunta-Bisanatham Gold Mine Block in Chittoor, Andhra Pradesh. NMDC's venture into coal with Tokisud North and Rohne Coal

Blocks in Jharkhand is another step in building a multi-mineral profile for the company. In the future, NMDC intends to diversify its operations into new age minerals like Lithium and Nickel. According to Deb, the demand for these strategic minerals will rapidly grow in the upcoming years and therefore NMDC is mining for opportunities of overseas investments and project acquisitions for this diversification.

Digital Initiatives

Mr. Deb's vision has instilled confidence in NMDC's technology up-gradation initiatives across its projects for quantum increase in output and improved overall efficiency. As the company expands, it is making massive investments to enhance its technical and digital strength. NMDC is using some of the world's most powerful geospatial data analytics and mapping technologies for mineral exploration. Recently, NMDC collaborated with IIT Kharagpur for a first-of-its-kind initiative of drone-based mineral exploration.

NMDC is not only adopting cutting-edge technologies such as ERP through SAP HANA, Vision Enhancement System and Automation of Subsystems, the company is now in the process of implementing Fleet Management and contemplating the implementation of Automatic Sampling System at its mining complexes. Deb believes that interventions of this kind will bring digital disruption to the mining sector and drive NMDC to a 100 million tonnes mining capacity company by 2030. The future of mining will be driven by technology that can achieve the vision of Industry 4.0. NMDC is implementing these technologies and increasing investment in digitalisation based on their feasibility in the company's ecosystem.

R&D Capabilities

NMDC boasts of its own R&D Centre at Hyderabad which is recognized as a Centre of Excellence by UNIDO and also has ISO & EMS accreditations. The expertise of NMDC's R&D wing is not only used for benefitting and upscaling its own operations but also helps various sectoral clients like SAIL, CIL, and NTPC among others. The R&D Centre has an inheritance of over five decades serving the mineral industries and has evolved with time to extend its expertise. The Centre has subsequently grown into a strong, full-fledged R&D wing extending technology support to NMDC's in-house projects and other organizations in India and abroad.

The PSE's R&D Centre provides integrated solutions focusing on the life cycle of iron ore and other minerals under one roof. It is equipped with state-of-the-art testing facilities and a multi-disciplinary team of Geologists, Chemists and Mineral, Metallurgical, Electrical, Mechanical and Chemical Engineers to address every challenge. A strong Research and Development wing plays a key role in sustainable growth of an organization and today's NMDC is an iron-strong witness to it.

Sustainable Mining Practices

All the mining complexes of NMDC have been endowed with 5 Star rating by the Indian Bureau of Mines, Ministry of Mines, thanks to its scientific and sustainable mining practices. After planting over 3.5 million trees, setting up Solar Power Projects and Windmills for renewable power generation, NMDC is working towards 'Zero-Waste Mining' by exploring various grades of iron ore. Under the sustainability development programme, several Sewage Treatment Plants and Tailing Dams have been constructed at all its major projects. Most of their mining complexes have been awarded Greentech Environment Awards during the Mines Environment and Mineral Conservation Week year on year. Annual Carbon Footprint studies are being conducted for disclosure of Greenhouse Gas Emissions in the Carbon Disclosure Project (CDP). In the last decade, the company has reduced its total per tonne GHG emission intensity by 24%.

NMDC is conducting the Field Studies for reviewing its

Environment, Social and Governance (ESG) performance for disclosure under Business Responsibility and Sustainability Reporting (BRSR).

CSR Initiatives

Throughout its existence of about 65 years, NMDC has endeavored to empower socio-economically disadvantaged students, tribals and differently-abled children living in communities around its areas of operations through robust education and skill development initiatives. The company has invested decades in enhancing the quality of life of its host communities while ensuring that the development is socio-culturally sustainable. NMDC's CSR Focus Areas - Education, Health, Skill Development, Infrastructure, and Safe Drinking Water are creating value and opportunities for people in the hinterlands of India.

The company's flagship CSR initiative Balika Shiksha Yojana - sponsors 40 tribal girl students for professional nursing courses every year. The initiative completed a decade of service in 2021 with NMDC contributing to the journey of over 400 tribal girl students becoming healthcare professionals of the country and agents of change in their villages. From empowering women to upskilling youth, generating employment opportunities to addressing public health, NMDC has been a steady pillar in enabling progress in the deep hamlets of India.

This CSR journey started with healthcare. As soon as NMDC was able to set up medical facilities for its employees in remote regions, it was extended to and always open for people around, thereby developing a relationship with them that perhaps won the company its first social license.

NMDC's CMD is inspiring the company to build a unique corporate identity and brand voice. From revamping stakeholder relations to building a strong digital presence, NMDC is becoming an opinion leader in the mining sector of India.

On the company's current performance, Deb commented that with an upswing in the demand for steel, NMDC is on the path to cater to the steel industry as one of the most consistent suppliers of iron ore. "The growth trajectory of our performance in the last quarter has been exceptional and displays NMDC's commitment towards a self-sufficient nation by setting new benchmarks."

By **BHAWANA SOMAAYA**

Film critic, author, broadcaster and podcaster

With a Twist and a Swirl

A trained dancer herself, the ace chronicler of Bollywood picks her top filmi *naach gaana*

Aplam Chaplam

***Azaad* (1955)**

This was perhaps the first time Hindi film audiences saw a classical style—Bharatanatyam—in its purest form. Even the interlude music is full of *jatis*. Choreographed by Hiralal, it's best known for showcasing two pairs of sisters: Sayee-Subbulakshmi, the dancing duo that ruled the 1950s, were on screen. Usha-Lata, the Mangeshkars, their voices as supple as ballerinas, ventriloquised them backstage. Movement, exuberant and graceful and always incredible, is in perfect sync here with expressions. Sixty-seven years later, you still cannot make up your mind which sister is dancing better. It's a beautiful demonstration of how it is possible to marry a classical dance to a filmi tune. The sheer skills make it a piece still hard to replicate.

Pyaar Kiya Toh Darna Kya

***Mughal-E-Azam* (1960)**

If K. Asif's magnum opus is so universally seen as a classic, a key reason for it is the unforgettable song/dance sequences: they continue to set a benchmark that filmmakers can only try in vain to emulate. *Mohe Panghat Pe*, with its lovely demonstration of *abhinaya*, deserves to be on any best-of list, but Kathak guru Lachchu Maharaj takes it a notch higher here. A visual treat, the song captures all of Mughal palace grandeur—the shot of Anarkali's *chakkars* reflected in the mirrored ceiling is iconic as love, momentarily, conquers might. Madhubala is radiant as the rebel with a cause, audaciously speaking (and dancing) truth to power.

Aa Jane Jaa / O Haseena Zulfonwali

***Intaqam* (1969) / *Teesri Manzil* (1966)**

It's criminal to do a list and not have dances by the luminous Helen, who delighted audiences for decades with her terpsichorean talent. Whether *lavani* ('*O Mungda*', *Inkaar*) or cabaret, she aced it all. She and choreographer P.L. Raj were a winning combination, giving us some magical memories. *Aa Jaane Jaa* is a soft Lata number where Helen seduces without ever seeming vulgar. And *O Haseena* is right out of the vibrant club scene of the 1960s, with Shammi Kapoor complementing Helen, one of those joyous instances when the hero is equally eager to show off his moves.

Chadh Gayo Papi Bichua

***Madhumati* (1958)**

Sachin Shankar, a student and cousin of the legendary Uday Shankar, delivers this folksy routine with a sweetly insistent chorus line. Known for his '50s ballets, Shankar teams with director Bimal Roy here to rediscover dance in its old role: as a storytelling device. Romance is in the air as you see rural life—and a certain Vyjayanthimala—through the charmed gaze of an urban outsider in Dilip Kumar.

Piya Tose Naina Laage Re

***Guide* (1965)**

Vijay Anand was one of those who had great understanding of dance picturisation on the mainstream canvas. *Piya Tose* exemplifies how he thought of dances as a key filmic artefact. A huge budget was set aside for this sprawling documentation of Rosie (Waheeda Rehman) evolving from a small dancer into a dancing star. Said to have been shot over nearly 15 days, and running some nine minutes, it showcases Hiralal's versatility as a choreographer.

Hoton Pe Aisi Baat

***Jewel Thief* (1967)**

Another Vijay Anand masterclass in storytelling through song. Choreographed by Sohanlal, Saroj Khan was an assistant on this dramatic number. It's got everything: drums, masks, suspense and a bevy of dancers whose frenetic energy is caught in all its colour through long takes. Vyjayanthimala was referred to as an *apsara* those days—her body language was reminiscent of ancient temple sculptures. An other-worldliness so key to the magic of cinema.

In Aankhon Ki Masti

***Umrao Jaan* (1981)**

Asha Bhosle, Kathak dancer-choreographer Kumudini Lakhia and the incomparable Rekha at their sublime best. When this mujra played in single-screen theatres, women filled the afternoon shows and admired and applauded every close-up of Rekha. Shot and staged beautifully by director Muzaffar Ali, it's an ode to *shringar rasa*. The teasing, the build-up, the reveal...it's everything a memorable dance should be.

Dholi Taro Dhol Baaje

***Hum Dil De Chuke Sanam* (1999)**

Garba, in all its glorious revelry, in a mainstream Hindi film. Sanjay Leela Bhansali's mother, Leela, taught the garba...so no wonder. He ropes in husband-wife duo Samir and Arsh Tanna as well as Vaibhavi Merchant for this opulent choreography. Arsh, fresh from maternity, was unwilling, but submitted to Bhansali and Aishwarya Rai—and a special vanity van! The purity of the folk style carried over so blazingly well, it fetched a National Award (and begat a national craze). In Gujarati, they say, '*Chaggana hai*'...it has to climax. The *Dholi Taaro* crescendo does exactly that.

Bindiya Chamkegi / I Love You

***Do Raaste* (1969)/ *Mr India* (1987)**

A lilting Pilu-based Punjabi folk air fills the terrace as Mumtaz distractingly woos her studious beau (Rajesh Khanna). A rare setting for romance—lovers in Hindi films usually chose locales far from the limiting confines of the house. Seduction, affection, respect, acceptance...all of it comes together beautifully with, yes, the chiffon sari that became a recurrent motif in Hindi films. In a very different song 16 years later, Sridevi in *Mr India* offered just two commonalities: chiffon and cult status. She understood what Shekhar Kapur and Saroj Khan wanted and gave more than could be articulated.

Ek Do Teen

***Tezaab* (1988)**

A path-breaking song, and a deceptively difficult one—with intricate steps plotted by Saroj Khan, mixing *mela* ground folk with hip hop. Madhuri Dixit had to rehearse for nearly two weeks before she was ready for the shoot. I remember travelling with the actress to the US for a show and as soon as we got off the flight, the organiser said she had to get on stage in hours and perform the song—and she said she couldn't. The song that made Madhuri a dancing star on par with Sridevi was no walk in the park!

MEGHALAYA

BETTER TODAY BEST TOMORROW

An IMPACT Presentation

INDIA TODAY GROUP

A Period of Progress

Meghalaya, the mesmerising hill state in India's scenic north-east, has completed 50 years of statehood in 2022. While geographical distance and barriers have often slowed down the progress of this state, since 2018, when Chief Minister Conrad K. Sangma-led government took charge of Meghalaya, it has witnessed unprecedented socio-economic development across all sectors.

> We are building a brand Meghalaya on which every citizen can capitalize and benefit. Together, we have taken significant strides in the development of the state through collaborative governance, decisive leadership, and determination.
>
> **Conrad K. Sangma**
> Chief Minister, Meghalaya

Meghalaya, blessed with immense natural beauty and resources, is one of India's smallest states. With an area of 22,720 square kilometre, it's 22nd in terms of size among states and 24th in terms of population, as home to 3.8 million people. Yet, the north-eastern state, which shares international border with Bangladesh, is unique in many ways. With an average annual rainfall of 1,150 cm, Meghalaya, which literally means abode of cloud, receives the highest amount of rainfall in the country. Recognised as a state of Indian Union, it may be just 50-year-old, but in 2018, the International Commission on Stratigraphy, which has divided the Holocene epoch into three subdivisions, named the late Holocene as the *Meghalayan* age. A speleothem in Mawmluh cave, which indicates, a dramatic worldwide climate event around 2250 BCE, has been chosen as the boundary stratotype.

The year 2018 also saw another change in Meghalaya—Conrad K. Sangma, only 40-year-old then, took charge of the state. It was a baptism by fire for the son of former Lok Sabha speaker PA Sangma, the most illustrious political leader from the north-east. The state was reeling under economic distress, corruption, socio-political frictions, and a collective sense of despair. Armed with a management degree from the prestigious Imperial College in United Kingdom, Chief Minister Conrad Sangma hit the ground running and set his priorities—sector-specific policies for economic development and ensuring their speedy execution.

And it was not going to be a short-term mission. In the very beginning of his tenure, Chief Minister Conrad Sangma said that it was imperative to lay down the vision and roadmap to build the Meghalaya that people of the state would want to see in the next 50 years. "We have to envision a plan for the next 50 years and work accordingly to ensure that we have a progressive state with equal opportunities for our people when we celebrate 100 years of statehood," said the chief minister. As evident now, the focus was not just on growth, but on inclusive development where every citizen of Meghalaya has been part of the progress.

And for that to happen the state needed to identify the capability of individuals and engage them in areas of expertise to bring out efficiency and deliver maximum results. So Chief Minister Conrad Sangma created task forces for formulating policies on education, telecom, youth, and sports. The objective was to frame policies considering the concerns of all stakeholders. Several policies, including on industries and tourism, were revisited. Every area of growth was spotted and encouraged. The microscopic focus was evident from the beginning.

The chief minister firmly believes that education is the key to unlocking the growth potential of the state. That's the reason it has been given top priority. "If we are able to create the right policies and work in a committed manner towards achieving our goals, it may take time, but we will surely be able to demonstrate Meghalaya as a shining example of how education should be imparted to the youngsters," says the chief minister. His government has already demonstrated the model. In the India Today State of the States survey, Meghalaya has been adjudged the Most Improved Small State in Education for two consecutive years—2021 and 2022.

To fundamentally transform the agriculture sector, his government launched a scheme termed FOCUS (Farmers Collectivization for Upscaling Production and Marketing System). This flagship initiative for the state's producers envisages the bottom-up collectivization of producers into groups. The producer groups are provided an amount of Rs 5,000 per producer as a group corpus for increasing production and productivity. This programme is a firm step to empower the farmers of Meghalaya so that they can come together and solve their immediate problems. Within a year, the programme has been a grand success. It currently covers almost 20,000 producer groups comprising 2,70,000 families, 330 cooperative societies and about 100 aggregation and processing centres. Hundreds of success stories are emerging from the FOCUS program.

Taking inspiration from the success and demand of the FOCUS programme, CM Conrad Sangma's government then launched the FOCUS+ programme. Under this, an unconditional and untied annual cash benefit of Rs 5,000 is provided individual bank accounts of each farmer who is part of a producer group to take up any farm production-related activity. With the FOCUS and the FOCUS+ programmes, each rural household will receive a cash benefit of Rs 10,000 per annum.

WHAT MAKES MEGHALAYA UNIQUE

- Meghalaya has 1,248 registered natural caves. International Commission on Stratigraphy, which has divided the Holocene epoch into three subdivisions, named the late Holocene as the Meghalayan age. A speleothem in Mawmluh cave, which indicates, a dramatic worldwide climate event around 2250 BCE, has been chosen as the boundary stratotype.
- Meghalaya is the only state where living root bridges are found
- Meghalaya is the only state to follow the matrilineal system, where the youngest daughter inherits family property
- Mawlynnong in Meghalaya is the cleanest village in India
- 320 varieties of orchids are found in Meghalaya
- Meghalaya boasts of 660 different species of birds out of which 35 are very rare and endangered species

THE BIG SPEND

Conrad Sangma's government has increased the average state expenditure by 48.7 per cent in last four years compared to the period between 2014 and 2018

Sector	Increase in spending
Healthcare	70.9%
Education	64.3%
Agriculture and allied fields	45.2%
Social welfare	103%
Water Supply and Sanitation	80.9%
Road connectivity	62.5%

The administration, from top to bottom, was given categorical objectives—ensuring livelihoods for all, building infrastructure for growth, nurturing the youth and children, empowering women, providing good governance and welfare to all, and making Meghalaya one of the top 10 states in the country in next 10 years, in in GSDP per capita and SDG ranking. "Our government has laid the foundation and Meghalaya will become one of the top 10 states in the country in the next 10 years. We will do it. We need to realise the importance as a society to move positively in the direction that we have set," says Chief Minister Conrad Sangma.

The management graduate chief minister understood the importance of administrative reforms to achieve this lofty goal. Several departments were restructured to create synergy and ensure faster delivery. He emphasized on the mutual co-operation among different departments and the society for achieving bigger objectives. "It is important that departments and people converge and combine efforts to achieve the larger vision and goal," says the chief minister.

Highlighting the roadmap for the development of the state, the chief minister paid attention to administrative expansion, especially at the block level to help ease of doing business for the common man as 70 per cent of the services that the people need is through blocks. And the chief minister did not lose sight of the hard realities. There were still villages in Meghalaya where people had to travel more than two hours just to get their old age pension or to see the MGNREGA wages. The Conrad Sangma government took steps to improve this and create more administrative units at the grassroots level. Meghalaya has now improved its performance in various schemes, bringing Meghalaya from bottom to the top.

But more importantly, what Chief Minister Sangma wanted to achieve first was taking the fruits of development to every citizen of Meghalaya. The government has been working with commitment and confidence to ensure holistic and overall growth and progress in the state. The constant endeavour is not to leave behind any region in Meghalaya's journey towards progress and prosperity. "We cannot bring changes only by developing Shillong and Tura or town areas. Development should reach the remotest areas of the state. Even the people living in the remotest areas should have access to development that they deserve," says Conrad Sangma. As 80 per cent of the population reside in rural areas, the focus is more on the taking modern amenities and infrastructure to the villages. "Development has no meaning if it is not inclusive. Every citizen must be equal stakeholder in the process. In these last four years, we haven't left any section of the society behind. We are committed to include all the sections of the society and facilitate in their physical and social well-being," adds the chief minister.

It was a highly challenging journey, made even more difficult by Covid pandemic, which hit the state, along with the rest of the world, in 2020. The flight to growth, prosperity and social justice came to a grinding halt as mankind began fighting back the onslaught of an invisible virus. But there was no scope to pause for long.

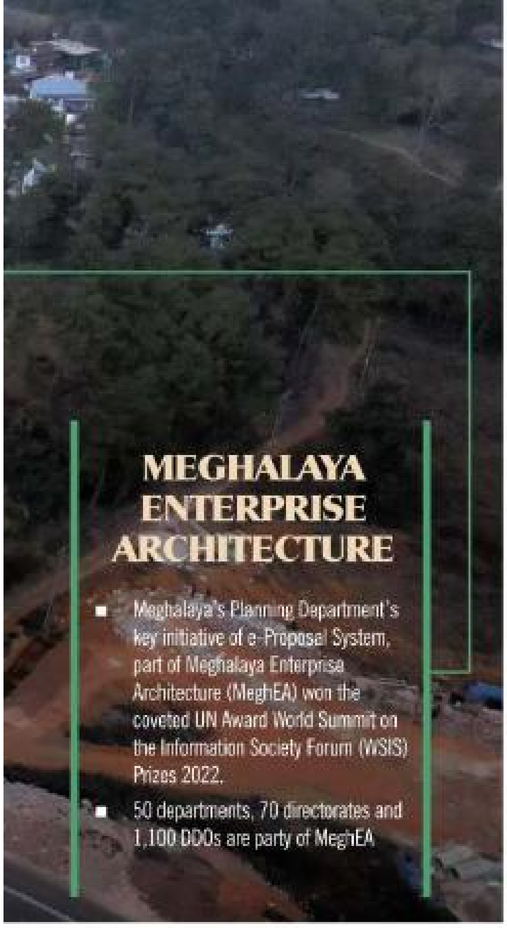
Meghalaya followed a unique collaborative approach in dealing with the Covid challenges, by involving the community leaders, localities, religious institutions and above all the people of the state. While the state government upgraded the infrastructure of several health facilities on war-footing, it fundamentally introduced a new model—"Behaviour Change Model for living with COVID-19"—which involves treating every resident as an asymptomatic carrier of the virus. An order was issued to treat everyone in the state as "Category 'A' patients unless they are tested on a continuous basis. The 'Category A' patient had to follow three non-negotiable practices: compulsory mask-wearing, hand hygiene and social distancing. This practice involved vigilant de-centralized monitoring by the communities. Hence, people in the state could perform their usual livelihood activities. In the pandemic year alone, Meghalaya witnessed a never seen before growth in rural roads—2.2 km roads were constructed every day.

Even as the collective battle against the lethal virus continues, Meghalaya and the world has limped back to what can be called "normal". The "engine" for development has been re-ignited and the programmes and policies to resolve the various unmet needs of the different sections of the society have been put on fast track.

As the state has completed 50 years of statehood, the momentous occasion also provides an opportunity to showcase the unprecedented socio-economic development Meghalaya witnessed during the tenure of Chief Minister Conrad Sangma. And the backbone of this developmental journey has been good governance. "We are building a brand Meghalaya on which every citizen can capitalize and benefit. Together, we have taken significant strides in the development of the state through collaborative governance, decisive leadership, and determination," says Conrad Sangma.

And the results are showing. The government has provided rural employment to a greater number of people and financially empowered more women than ever before. It has provided improved and innovative health care, ensured safe and uninterrupted supply of water and electricity, and implemented specific programmes for prosperity and welfare of the farmers.

The youth in Meghalaya now have more facilities and opportunities. Conrad Sangma government has rolled out the YESS (Youth Engagement through empowered Youth organizations) programme to empower young people to change their communities. YESS Meghalaya provides



MEGHALAYA ENTERPRISE ARCHITECTURE

- Meghalaya's Planning Department's key initiative of e-Proposal System, part of Meghalaya Enterprise Architecture (MeghEA) won the coveted UN Award World Summit on the Information Society Forum (WSIS) Prizes 2022.
- 50 departments, 70 directorates and 1,100 DDOs are party of MeghEA

financial assistance up to Rs 1 lakh to registered youth clubs and organisations across the state to carry out developmental activities relating to any of these focused areas—environmental protection and conservation programmes and workshops, financial literacy workshops and campaigns, substance abuse, teenage pregnancies awareness dissemination workshops and seminars, career counselling and guidance workshops and clinics, mass youth engagement programmes and activities, mental wellbeing seminars and campaigns, mass youth volunteering programmes, organisation of youth parliaments and debates, procurement of material, equipment and setting up of office space.

There are more than 3,000 registered youth clubs and organisations across the State who are working in different sectors. Apart from this, the government has instituted scholarship awards amounted One Crore for sporting talents. Moreover 238 athletes who achieved medals in North-East Olympic Games were rewarded with cash award of Rs. 37 Lakhs. "We are working on promoting entrepreneurship as we are aware that 50,000 youths are entering the market every year," says Conrad Sangma.

The state now also has an IT Park—Shillong Technology Park—which was inaugurated in February 2022. Spread over 80 acres of land currently, the first phase building of the technology park is going to create employment for more than 1,500 people directly and nearly three times job opportunities indirectly. "Meghalaya has 70 per cent population below the age of 35 years. The state has tremendous potential in IT sector. We have a great demographic dividend to harness the young people in the technology sector. Making the youth future ready at mass level is the prime focus of the government," says Conrad Sangma. Recently, Prime Minister Narendra Modi laid foundation stone for the second phase of the Shillong IT Park. This will create another 3,000 jobs. Another world class infrastructure is PA Sangma Integrated Sports Complex in Tura. Coming at a cost of Rs 128 crore and equipped to host national and international tournaments, the complex has a sitting capacity of 10,000.

Efforts were made to decentralise the power structure so that people could participate in the process of development at the grassroots level. The change is visible across all categories—infrastructure development, healthcare, education, power generation, job creation, women empowerment, prosperity of farmers, skill development, youth and child welfare, connectivity, tourism, and hospitality.

The connectivity in the state has improved considerably in last four years. There was a time when there was no flight from Shillong. Today the state has a functional airport servicing more than 10,000 passengers every month since 2021. The government has procured 800 acres of land in New Shillong Township to decongest the old city by setting up a new administrative city there.

Close to 3.5 lakh women are part of 38,000 self-help groups, a big jump of over 1,000 per cent from just 30,000 women in self-help groups in 2018. The government providing direct piped water to over 2.75 lakh households in about four years as compared to only 4,000 such families in 2019. This has improved and touched the lives of about 12 lakh individuals in the state through the Jal Jeevan Mission.

The decisive leadership of the chief minister left a mark in every domain. This year is estimated to be more than Rs.18,000 Crore. This has been possible because of tapping of external agencies, timely implementation of projects and running Central schemes in an efficient manner. Meghalaya has mobilised nearly Rs 10,000 crore from external agencies, a big jump from Rs 2,500 crore in 2018. Funds from these agencies support projects in tourism, water catchment area, road construction, integrated transport system and early childhood development programme among others.

Following the historic 2019 judgement by Supreme Court upholding the rights of tribal people over the land and minerals, mining has once again resumed in the state, bringing back livelihood opportunities to many in Meghalaya. The state government is taking all possible measures to encourage and ensure scientific mining.

The good news did not end there. Sangma genuinely believes that there is a huge potential for international trade between Meghalaya and neighbouring country Bangladesh. As a leader who steers clear of rhetoric and believe in walking the talk, he became the first Meghalaya chief minister to visit Jaintapur, an ancient kingdom, now a sub-division in Bangladesh. During his four-day-long tour to Bangladesh in 2019, Conrad has proposed to Government of India to build a new road from Mahendarganj in Garo Hills to Hili in West Bengal, passing through Bangladesh. This road would reduce the distance of travel from 1,100 km to 600 km thereby easing logistics movement.

While Conrad Sangma-led Meghalaya Democratic Alliance has nearly completed its term, the chief minister has no time to celebrate and pause. The road not build, and the state is burdened with a legacy of historical underperformance and political mismanagement. That makes the accomplishments of the first tenure of Conrad Sangma government even more significant.

But the chief minister is in no mood to claim credit yet. He sees this spike in the developmental curve of the state as a collective achievement of the people of Meghalaya. "I want to thank all our citizens for their support and contributions in building Meghalaya. I feel proud to be leading this amazing journey of building Meghalaya as a vibrant, caring, robust economy and society," he says.

Flagship Initiatives

YOUTH, FARMERS AND ENTREPRENEURS

1. Youth Engagement through Empowered Youth Organisations (YESS)

In Meghalaya, the percentage of population under the age of 35 is 74 per cent, much higher than the national average. This large segment of the state's population, if provided with the right opportunities, could become the key agents for social change, economic development, and technological innovation. Their potential was demonstrated during the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic in the state. The youth played a significant role in the on-ground management of various activities such as contact tracing, planning and delivery of essential supplies and awareness campaigns.

There are more than 3,000 registered youth clubs and organisations in Meghalaya, working for the development, engagement, and rejuvenation of the youth. However, for them to be able to take concrete action, which will have a larger impact on youth development, it is imperative that the state government empowers these youth organisations enabling them to take positive action.

This programme, therefore, has been formulated in pursuance to the State Youth Policy notified in 2021, which outlines the commitment of the Government of Meghalaya to youth engagement, empowerment, and rejuvenation. The Conrad Sangma government plans to channelise the energies of the youth in the right direction by giving stimulus to youth at the required levels.

Financial aid is provide to the youth clubs and associations working towards the development of the youth. The programme aims to empower the youth to plan and implement grassroot level programs and activities pertaining to key themes affecting the youth. An annual corpus fund has been created to provide financial benefit up to 1 Lakh to the registered not for profit youth clubs, organisations, and associations. This has been planned in a manner to create a nurturing ecosystem for the youth to seek excellence without the financial or any societal constraints.

TARGETED STAKEHOLDERS

This programme shall extend financial aid to registered entities focusing on youth development and empowerment such as:

a. Societies and cooperatives
b. Voluntary organisations
c. Youth clubs
d. Not for profit organisations
e. Socio-cultural clubs
f. Alumni associations
g. Community level youth institutions/organisations/groups

2. FOCUS—Farmers' Collectivization for Upscaling Production and Marketing System

The Government of Meghalaya launched the FOCUS (Farmers' Collectivization for Upscaling of Production and Marketing Systems) programme in March 2021 with an aim to increase production, improve productivity, facilitate credit linkages and strengthen access to markets for the producers engaged in activities such as farming, livestock rearing and related activities. The FOCUS program identifies production clusters of marketable produce, prioritizes value chain analysis of the products and forms bottom-up small collectives known as Producer Groups (PGs).

FOCUS Beneficiaries Testimonial:

- ***John Gilbert M Sangma***, Pepper Farmer, SWGH (FOCUS)

  "Our producer group received 75,000 rupees for farming activities. Together, we are using the funds for our farming operations to achieve better results. My income from pepper cultivation has already risen to 3 lakh rupees. Thanks to the Government of Meghalaya for providing us the FOCUS program."

- ***Marcelina Ch Marak***, Dachimagre PG, WGH (FOCUS)

  "We were starting our producer group with 10 members of our village. The government of Meghalaya gave us 50,000 rupees as financial assistance under FOCUS scheme. We began making banana chips through our PG. We are currently making good profits by selling the banana chips in our local market. We are grateful to the Honorable Chief Minister, Shri Conrad K. Sangma, and the Government of Meghalaya."The programme's objective is to reach all the 4.5 lakh rural households in Meghalaya. In about 1.5 years, the programme has benefitted over 2.5 lakh households.

Take the example of Armstrong Shylla. She runs a producer group (PG) named Na Dyngkhong Ki Nongrep in Mawkyrwat Block of South West Khasi Hills. Under FOCUS, this group of 15 members, received a mobilization support fund cheque of Rs 75,000. The PG invested this fund in buying quality seeds and better farm equipment and in packaging the produce better. This has resulted in surplus production and higher value for the produce.

Targeted to support farmers market and cooperative societies, the FOCUS programme has made a huge impact in furthering the collectivization movement in the State. The programme covers the entire umbrella of producers which includes not just those that are involved in farming and livestock rearing but even those who are engaged in other related activities such as handloom and handicrafts. The support money is provided as a grant to the producer groups to aid them in their agricultural activities. It has been observed that a large share of the support, given to the PGs, is being used by them to purchase agricultural inputs, the purchase of piglets and the aggregation of produce for processing and marketing. The feedback from the producers were overwhelming. However there was a gap in delivering the funds to the beneficiaries due to which few members didn't receive the benefits on time.

3. FOCUS+ —transition from collectives to individual

The FOCUS+ (FOCUS plus) programme has been conceptualized as an extension to the FOCUS and as a pivot from collectives to individuals. The collectivization movement heralded by the FOCUS programme has brought a fundamental and transformational shift in the agriculture and allied sectors in the state. While the government will continue to implement and expand the FOCUS programme, it is also felt that making the programme comprehensive and more impactful by giving greater agency to individuals is the way forward. This will be in line with other programmes such as the PM-KISAN wherein the individual farmers are being made the anchors and given the responsibility for the overall growth of the primary sector.

FOCUS+ could be availed by the individual producer after being a part of a producer group. They'll receive a FOCUS+ card upon which, Rs 5000 will be disbursed in tranches. The beneficiaries can undertake activities related to agri-value chain development. This amount will be in addition to the corpus of Rs 5,000 that they are already eligible for as part of being a member of a producer group.

4. PRIME—Promotion and Incubation of Market Driven Enterprise (Rural & Urban)

Entrepreneurs are provided with kick start grants up to Rs 5 lakh; interest and collateral free loans up to Rs 25 lakh. In PRIME Urban E-championship Challenge, 2021, more than 1,600 applicants registered.

Infrastructure

THE BUILDING BLOCKS OF GROWTH

The MDA government has kick started several key infrastructural projects aimed at multi-dimensional development in the state

Hospitality

Vivanta Meghalaya

PROJECT COST ₹ **75** crore

Vivanta Meghalaya is Meghalaya's 1st 5-star hotel. Conrad turned Messi by ending a 36 year long wait to make this dream come true

Meghalaya Homestay Scheme

TARGET 2,500 homestays in the next five years

Tourism department has allocated up to Rs 10 lakh for promoting homestays in the state; 35 per cent subsidy provided

Shillong IT Park

PROJECT COST ₹ **40** crore

Shillong IT Park will fulfil the aspirations of the youth graduating from the state. It has already generated 1,500 jobs and has the capacity to generate 3,000 more jobs, thereby curbing the migration of the skilled youth in search of employment from Meghalaya.

Tura Convention Centre

PROJECT COST ₹ **23** crore

STATUS Expected to be completed by May 2023

It aims to promote regional start-ups and provide employment opportunities.

Prime Hubs

PROJECT COST ₹ **25** crore

STATUS 4 Prime hubs (Shillong, Tura, Songsak, Dalu) are already Functional. 4 more to be completed.

The PRIME Hub is a dedicated space for the youth and budding entrepreneurs of Meghalaya, where ideas are transformed into reality. The PRIME hubs are incubation centres developed under the vigilance of the Government of Meghalaya. The hub, offers co-working office space to start-ups and helps them build and grow their business ventures further. Interested entrepreneurs can apply to make use of this co-working space.

SICPAC

PROJECT COST ₹ **151.33** crore

The Shillong International Centre for Performing Arts and Culture (SICPAC) facility to promote intangible heritage and transform Shillong in a cultural hub. This facility comprises a Multipurpose Theatre with a capacity of 1739 seats, a Little Theatre with 302 seats, a Black Box Theatre with 574 seats, and an Open-Air Theatre with a standing capacity of 15,000 people

JLN Stadium Complex and Outdoor Stadium

PROJECT COST ₹ **40** crore

STATUS Under construction

This is a world class sports infrastructure for hosting national & international football, track& field and other tournaments, with a sitting capacity of 35,000.

Shillong Smart City

- Rs.25.73 crore for Redevelopment of Laitumkhrah Market
- Rs.75 crore for construction of POLO Market.

PA Sangma Integrated Sports Complex, Tura

PROJECT COST ₹ **128** crore

This is a world class sports infrastructure for hosting national & international tournaments, with a sitting capacity of 10,000.

Integrated Hospitality and convention centre, Tura

PROJECT COST ₹ **56** crore

State of art facilities to experience the rich heritage and culture of Garo tribe. Project is envisioned to meet both facilities required for convention activities and guest's facilities.

Rs 410.5 crore investment in sports infrastructure in last four years, 2.5 times more than the preceding four years

OTHER KEY INFRA INITIATIVES

- Shillong New Administrative City in Mawpdang has been planned to decongest the city and ease the governance.
- Eastern West Khasi Hills with its headquarters in Mairang has been created as the 12th district of Meghalaya. Mairang is one of the oldest civil sub-divisions in the state
- Mini secretariat offices at Tura and Jowai are being constructed to decentralize the governance and reduce the gap between citizen and the state government.
- Construction of the Laitumkhrah market in Shillong
- Community led town beautification in Shillong, Tura, and Jowai; Rs 5.5 crore allotted for town beautification

OTHER SPORTS ARENAS

- JN Sports Complex and Indoor Stadium, Shillong at a cost of Rs 97 crore; expected to be completed by December 2023
- JN Sports Complex and Outdoor Stadium, Shillong at a cost of Rs 40 crore; expected to be completed by December 2022
- Wahiajer Multi Sports Complex, West Jaintia Hills, at a cost of Rs 25 crore; expected to be completed by December 2022. Seating capacity 3000.

EDUCATION

2,000 schools are getting renovated/ upgraded; 208 already completed.

510 additional classrooms constructed at a cost of Rs 29 crore

Rs 920 crore sanctioned for 39 Eklavya Model Residential Schools

700 schools are provided with Smart Kits

Higher educational institutes, in every district soon to become a reality, at an investment of Rs 97 crore

12 peoples colleges sanctioned across the state, to make quality higher education available to the rural people

Skilling and employment generation

LEARN A SKILL, EARN A JOB

The government launched the Youth Policy with nine thrust areas and 55 performance monitoring indicators

- More than 23,000 youth have been trained on personal growth, leadership development, digital literacy, communication, career preparedness, talent, and aspiration development
- 16,616 young men and women were trained under Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikash Yojana
- 6,576 youth were employed in sectors such as tourism and hospitality, IT-TES, retail, automotive, electronics and hardware
- 104 School Dropouts trained in construction

THE START-UP PUSH

- State-of-the-art 4 Prime Hubs (Shillong, Tura, Songsak, Dalu) are already Functional.
- 4 more PRIME hubs to be completed.
- 1,400 start-ups have been supported through PRIME
- Rs 5 lakh kick start grant
- Rs 25 lakh scale-up innovation loan
- Rs 5 lakh interest-free loan
- Rs 1 lakh grant to top 25 start-ups
- Rs 50,000 grant to top 50 start-ups

Healthcare

IN SOUND HEALTH

- Rs 350 crore for health infrastructure improvement—four new primary health centres and three 100-bedded hospitals
- 4.7 lakh households enrolled under Megha Health Insurance Scheme (MHIS) given one-time cash grant of Rs 5,000; Rs 7,206 average insurance benefit to every patient; MHIS (II) until 2019 had merely Rs.2.8 lakh health coverage only
- 21 per cent reduction in infant mortality in 2020-21
- 9 per cent reduction in maternal mortality in 2020-21
- 13 per cent increase in institutional delivery between 2018 and 2020
- More than 1.95 lakh mothers registered on Meghalaya's Outcomes oriented Transformation in Health, nutrition, Education and Rural development (MOTHER) Programme app.
- 91 per cent children received complete immunization in 2020-21
- 5.18 lakh beneficiaries under Poshan Abhiyan in 2021-22
- Home cooked meal every month to 35,600 children aged between 3 and 6; fast resolution of ASHA workers' payment; hike in Anganwadi workers' payment
- A digital system to ease the ASHA Payments have been developed and launched. Through the "ASHA First" portal ASHA workers are now getting timely payments for their services. The payments earlier used to take more than a month is now getting done in 2-3 days.
- More than Rs. 80 crores have been sanctioned and released for ASHA workers Payment in last 3 years, while only 18 Crores were disbursed from 2011-18
- The incentive for Anganwadi workers has also been improved. The state component has been doubled and new honorarium structure is:
- Anganwadi Workers- Rs. 7500/ month
- Anganwadi Helpers – Rs. 3250/ month

Rural development

RURAL RECORDS

- During FY 2018-22 the expenditure was Rs.4,500 Crore while in preceding 4 years, it was merely Rs.2,500 Crore. This led to more than Rs.16,659 annual amount transferred on an average to every household, while in the last government it was around Rs.9,000.
- Meghalaya was one of the top 3 performers among states in terms of giving work under MGNREGS

	2014-18	2018-22	Growth
Expenditure	Rs 2,574 crore	Rs 4506 crore	75 %
Amount transferred per year per household	Rs 9,901	Rs 16659	68%
Average days of employment per year per household	59.59	73.71	24%
Women Employed	10,29,052	15,35,948	49%
Assets Created	57,880	75,121	30%

SMART VILLAGE MOVEMENT

The Sangma government aspires to build smart villages with innovative solution and foster sustainable rural development. Here are some of the key initiatives.

- Gramin Healthcare Polyclinic
- Apollo Meghalaya Digital Dispensary
- Drone Pilot for Medicine Delivery
- Salesforce Trailblazer Lab
- Farmer Development Centres
- Spatial Imagery Pilot to empower farmers with Technology Smart and Clean Energy with Hygge
- Tata Swachh Water purification Systems
- Watsan Clean Water Solutions

Women empowerment

UNLEASHING THE POTENTIAL

Rs 97 crore were disbursed to 38114 women self-help groups (SHG) impacting 3,37,622 households.

	2014-18	2018-22	Increase
No of SHGs	5,808	37,328	6 times
Households engaged	60,198	3,46,176	4.7 times
Disbursement to SHGs	Rs 10 crore	Rs 270 crore	27 times

50 per cent reservation for women in village employment councils

Functional Working Women's Hostel at Shillong and Tura, at a cost of Rs 9 crore

Agriculture

FOCUS ON FARMERS

- Rs 5,000 transferred annually to 4,50,000 farming households
- 86,000 Kisan Credit Card holders received interest free loans
- 40,000 women farmers benefited
- 185 Collective Marketing Centres (CMC) created
- 330 new Integrated Village Cooperative Societies (IVCS) created connecting 1,00,000 households
- 100 farmers market being created, each of these equipped with cold storage
- 31 CMCs created for food processing; 19 CMCs for ginger and pepper processing
- Mushroom Development Centre at a cost of Rs 5 crore completed; Integrated Bee Development Centre at a cost of Rs 10 crore sanctioned.
- 59,440 Ha of irrigation potential generated through 1,131 irrigation projects
- 40,000 beneficiaries strengthened through irrigation projects

MEGHALAYA IN MISSION MODE

Multiple projects with specific thrust areas were taken up on mission mode, yielding incredible results

- **Mission Lakadong:** 15 CMCs and two processiong units set up. 12.998 farmers benefitted. Turmeric production reached 11,832 MT showing 66 per cent growth
- **Megh-Aroma Mission:** 235 Ha area under plantation with a budget of Rs 19 crore, covering 1,600 farmers, 6 IVCS, 9 VECs, 52 SHGs, 9 cooperative societies, and 4 farmers group. Annual oil production touched 3.5 tonnes.
- **Meghalaya State Aquaculture Mission:** Investment of Rs 378 crore; additional water area of 1,400 Ha for fish production, 7,000 fish farmers benefitted. Fish production touched 16,123 MT in 2020-21, 30 per cent increase

Progress Scheme:

- Progress Scheme: Rs.44 Crore disbursed to 253 Cooperatives. High-yielding variety of piglets and Kuroiler birds have been distributed under PROGRESS scheme. A total budget of Rs.40 Crore for piglets and Rs 1 Crore for poultry birds.

Connectivity

CONNECTING THE DOTS

The state government has massively increased investment in improving connectivity by road and air

	2014-18	2018-22	Growth
Rural road constructed	700	2334	3 times
Expenditure	₹ 507	₹ 1650	3 times
Habitations connected	103	171	66%

2.2 km road were constructed daily in 2020-21

Meghalaya is now connected to 8 cities by air; 250+ aircrafts carry 10,000 passengers per month

Social Welfare

THE ROAD TO INCLUSIVE DEVELOPMENT

- To increase financial inclusion, more than 1,000 banking correspondents(BCs) have been deployed in 4,578 villages to provide doorstep banking services
- 400 new micro–ATMs at a cost of Rs 1.26 crore have been distributed
- 4,467 fair price shops have been provided with ePoS devices and mobile internet connectivity
- Ex-gratia payment of Rs 50,000 to families of deceased due to Covid-19
- North-east region's first ever de-addiction centre for juveniles has been set up
- Investment of Rs 25.3 crore for construction of 37 Anganwadi Buildings, six girls and women hostels, Integrated Social Facilitation Centre, school and vocational centre for Juvenile Inmates
- #Assistance of Rs 6,000 annually to 1.77 lakh citizens of Meghalaya; pension amount has been increased from Rs 500 per month to Rs 750 per month

EVERY DROP COUNTS

Merely 4,500 rural households had tap water connectivity in 2019. Meghalaya now has more than 2.5 lakhs of rural households with tap water connectivity

- 2,252 water supply schemes worth Rs 2,703 crore are in progress
- 2.06 lakh households provided tap water in just two years; Rs 745.8 crore invested since 2019 to provide tap water
- 1,267 villages provided with 100 per cent Functional Household Tap Connection in last two years, 47 times more than earlier

A CLEAN DROP OF WATER

Chongpotgre and Okkapara Songgitcham village located in Gambegre Block of West Garo Hills with a total of 260 households, is an excellent example of 100 per cent attainment of Functional Household Tap Connection (FHTC) under the Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM). Earlier these villages were drawing water from Dilni River, that runs between the two villages. The water quality of this river was not fit for human consumption and people were facing various health problems. The successful implementation of this JJM has improved the livelihood of the area. With the implementation of this programme, today the local communities have access to clean drinking water. The villagers have also formed Village Water Sanitation Committee for planning, implementation, management, operation, and maintenance of in-village water supply infrastructure.

Energy

LIGHTING UP THE STATE

The Meghalaya Government has taken bold steps to reform power sector by clearing all long pending liabilities.

- In the process of clearing decade-long outstanding liability of Rs 1,345 crore to various CPSUs/power generation companies
- Ganol Hydro Electric Project, with a capacity of 22.5 MW and built at a cost of Rs 508 crore, is nearing completion
- Steps taken for improvement of 37 new sub-stations
- 37 augmented sub-stations of 33/11kV capacity are being installed
- 1.8 lakh new smart meters are being installed
- 2,382 ckm power lines of 33 and 11kV capacity are being laid
- 10 sub-stations extended to 33kV Bay,
- New and centralized UGO utility billing software has been initiated

ENVIRONMENT

Restoration of abandoned coal mines—9 lakh seedlings raised

Inauguration of Sohra Eco-restoration project

Launch of One Citizen One Tree Initiative

18,157 Ha of land area covered under Community Led Landscape Management Project

Launched the Payment for Ecosystem Services scheme to help the community in protecting the natural environment and to provide assistance to the farmers

Tourism

A HOME IN THE CLOUDS

Tourism has been one of the biggest thrust areas for the Sangma government

- Rs 1,600 crore earmarked to boost tourism.
- Accommodation and Hospitality complexes at seven locations
- Rural tourism infrastructure at multiple villages at a cost of Rs 5 crore each
- Rs 85 crore sanctioned under Swadesh Darshan scheme to promote, develop, and harness the tourism potential
- Launched the Meghalaya Grassroots Music project to recognise and promote musical talents as well as provide support to artistes for events outside the state

UPCOMING KEY PROJECTS

Integrated Hospitality & Sports Complex, Shillong

Shillong Ropeway

Convention Centre and hospitality complex, Orchid Lake

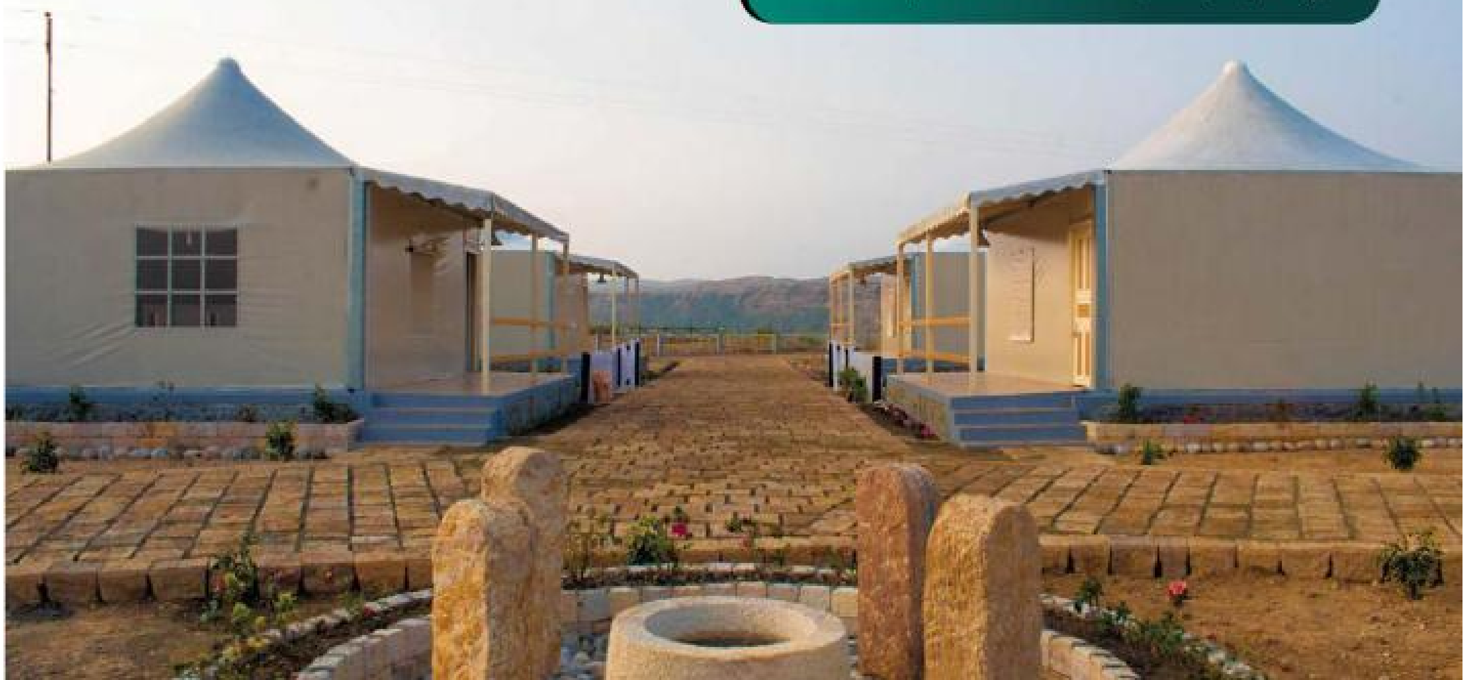
Umiam Water Sports Complex

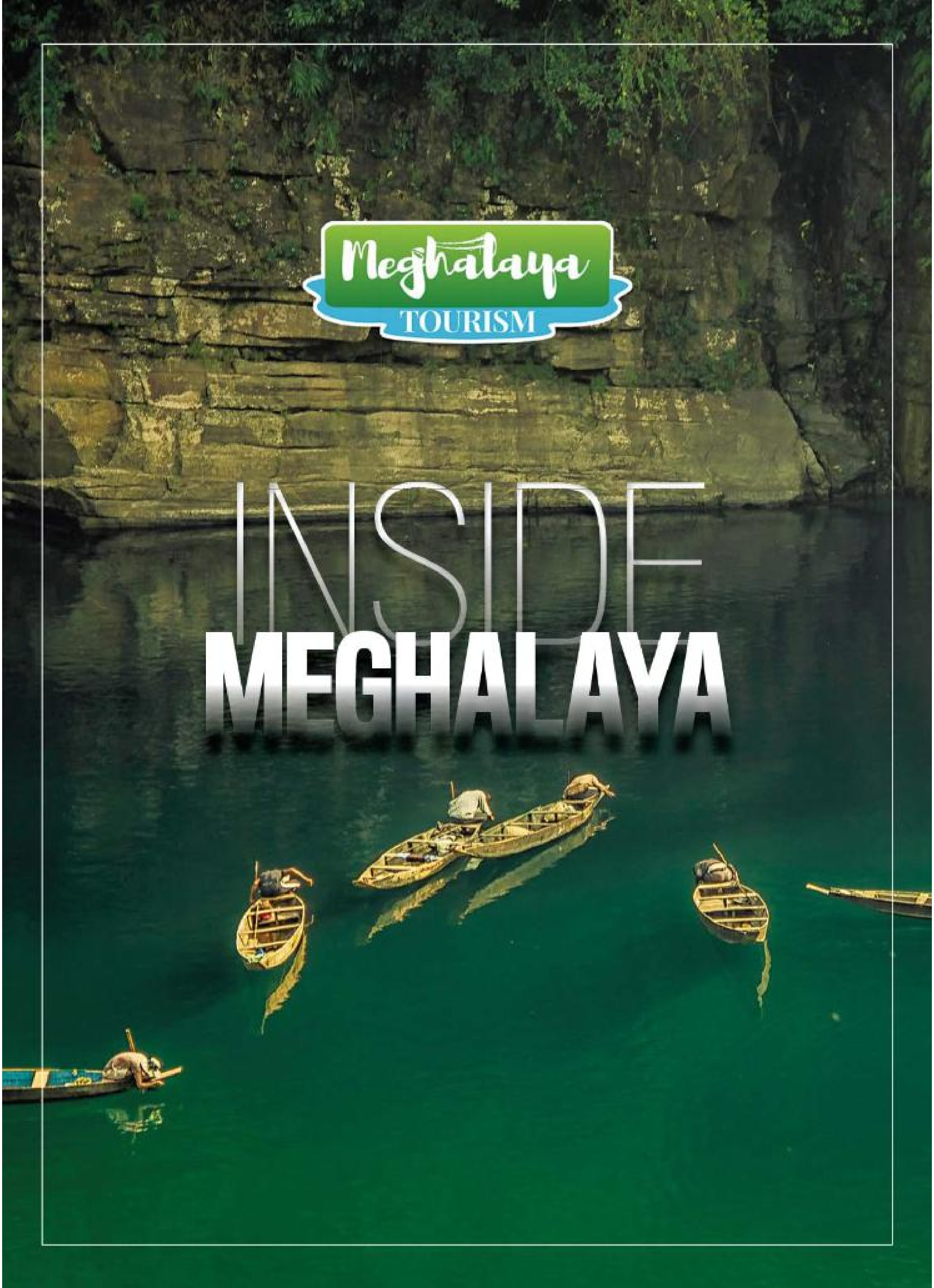
Integrated Hospitality & Convention Centre, Tura

Hospitality Complex and heritage village, Sohra

Hospitality Complex and tourism infrastructure at Nongmahir,

Thadlaskein, Nonkhnum River island, Mawlyndep Village





Meghalaya
TOURISM

INSIDE
MEGHALAYA

Serial Entertainers

To shortlist the best from across some 60 years, not to speak of the smorgasbord of languages and genres served to us daily by 500+ channels, is a tough ask. But let's go by a truism: nothing has influenced Indian society as much as television. Here, then, are perhaps the most influential...

By AMIT KHANNA

Film producer, director, writer, journalist

Ramayan/ Mahabharat

Ramanand Sagar's *Ramayan* (1987-88) was so popular that India would come to a virtual standstill every Sunday morning at 9. Millions gathered before their own or their neighbour's TV sets. A sacred ritual for many—they bathed and did puja in front of their new colour TVs before Arun Govil and Dipika Chikhlia incarnated (for many, literally as Lord Rama and Sita). For all its loud, melodramatic acting and tacky production values, it amassed a cult following, teasing India's hitherto latent religiosity out into the open. B.R. Chopra's *Mahabharat* (1988-90) was, by comparison, better served by its writer, Rahi Masoom Raza. But the two serials became a kind of contemporary folklore that, many sociologists believe, were a catalyst for the rise of Hindutva.

Buniyaad

Ramesh Sippy, the director of India's greatest box-office hit *Sholay*; Manohar Shyam Joshi, the writer of *Hum Log* (1984), India's first telenovela; and I as producer got together to make *Buniyaad* (1986–87)—the saga of a Punjabi family's rise and fall in the backdrop of Partition and an underlay of idealism in the lives of the main protagonists. A lot of attention to detail came courtesy Prof. Pushpesh Pant, a cultural anthropologist, and eminent Hindi novelist Krishna Sobti. With realistic sets designed by veteran art director Sudhendhu Roy and photographed by the acclaimed cinematographer K.K. Mahajan, *Buniyaad* still remains one of the best fiction shows on Indian TV. Carefully nuanced, the Joshi-Sippy duo was helped by one of the best ensembles of fine actors: Alok Nath, Anita Kanwar, Kanwaljit Singh, Rajesh Puri, Mazhar Khan, Dilip Tahil, Soni Razdan, Kiran Juneja, Asha Sachdev, Sudhir Pandey, Vijayendra Ghatge, Neena Gupta and Pallavi Joshi.

Chitrahaar/ Rangoli

As unique as the Indian tradition of songs in films, *Chitrahaar* (1982–) and *Rangoli* (1988–) were not inspired by any foreign format but evolved in the musty corridors of Doordarshan. Come Wednesday evenings and early Sunday mornings, people across India would line up before the nearest TV set to watch these medleys of favourite film songs. Later, as these shows were thrown open for bidding, I and some other producers would pay upwards of Rs 1 crore per week to DD for their telecast/production rights. We reimagined it as a simple, thematically woven garland of songs with star anchors, and logged the highest ratings for years.

Chitrahaar
Today at 12:30 pm
on DD NATIONAL

Mirza Ghalib

When Gulzar, Jagjit Singh and Naseeruddin Shah combine to recreate the life of one of India's greatest poets, you are sure to get a masterpiece, low budget notwithstanding. Telecast on Doordarshan in 1988, *Mirza Ghalib* is the rare serial on a literary figure, with exquisite music, acting and ambience. Gulzar brings a detached empathy to Ghalib's character—you catch glimpses of humour, sarcasm, romance and tragedy. The dialogues faithfully echoing the unique lingo of old Delhi's *galiyaan* (lanes and alleys) is an audio-visual treat. Jagjit Singh composes and sings some of Ghalib's best poems as an added bonus. Besides Naseer's fantastic performance, Parikshit Sahni, Tanvi Azmi, Neena Gupta, Shafi Inamdar and Sudhir Dalvi put in top-class cameos as well.

Bharat Ek Khoj

This magnum opus by Shyam Benegal, based on Nehru's The Discovery of India, was for a whole generation their first lesson in Indian history, from the Indus Valley to Independence. Ace writers (Shyam himself, Shama Zaidi, Sunil Shanbag, Satyadev Dubey and Vasant Dev); sterling actors like Naseeruddin Shah, Om Puri, Irrfan Khan; V.K. Murthy's camera lingering studiously on pared-down sets and believable costumery, in sync with Vanraj Bhatia's thoughtful music, this 53-episode series (aired from Nov. 1988 to Nov. 1989) broke the Raja Ravi Varma-style calendar art imagery for historical characters. And the narrative style—Roshan Seth's Nehru with a counterview by Om Puri—was fascinating.

HEMANT PITHWA

Kaun Banega Crorepati

Adapted from Celador's chartbuster *Who Wants To Be A Millionaire?*, industry gossip says the Hong Kong-based Star TV's programming boss Steve Askew selected the format while its India programming head Sameer Nair zeroed in on Amitabh Bachchan as anchor...a masterstroke. Bachchan, then going through a lean patch, took a big risk going on TV, which was still looked down upon by film stars. But he worked hard, and watched various versions of the show. The production was entrusted to Siddharth Basu, India's best quizmaster. From the very first episode aired in 2000, *KBC* was a national rage.

C.I.D.

TV in India has a long tradition of detective shows: think *Karamchand*, *Byomkesh Bakshi*, *Reporter*, *Tehkikat*, *Raja aur Rancho*. But it took *C.I.D.*, producer-director B.P. Singh's Indian cop version of Sherlock Holmes, to break open the doors of mega success—captivating viewers over two decades (1998-2018). Arguably the longest running fiction show in India, each episode featured a new case solved by a team of police officers led by ACP Pradyuman. The talented Shivaji Satam went on to become synonymous with the character.

Antakshari/ Sa Re Ga Ma Pa/ Indian Idol

Talent shows, especially those featuring amateur singers, are a common motif among most general entertainment channels. Zee TV in 1993 was the first to create a homegrown format based on a popular game played in Indian households—*Antakshari*. The show was initially directed by Gajendra Singh and anchored by actors Annu Kapoor and Renuka Shahane and later by artistes like Sonu Nigam and Pallavi Joshi. The gameplay was simple, and it immediately became a hit with the viewers. Over the years, talent shows like *Sa Re Ga Ma Pa* (1995-) or its kids' version *L'il Champs* (2006-), *Indian Idol* (2004-) and *India's Got Talent* (2009-) have become a platform for talented singers from small towns and villages, and have given the world stars like Sunidhi Chauhan and Shreya Ghoshal.

A PRABHAKAR RAO

REDISCOVERY OF INDIA

Long sidelined, India's handloom sector has found a silver lining in the pandemic as the appreciation for slow, sustainable fashion grows

By **LAILA TYABJI**

Designer, activist and founder member, Dastkar

IT may seem that handloom weavers, battered by demonetisation, the hideously flawed implementation of GST, the lure of synthetic mill-made brands and the whims and fancies of contemporary urban fashion, culminating in two years of Covid-induced lockdowns and the loss of lives and markets, have little to rejoice about. Rarely mentioned in the press, they might be hard-pressed to find good things to say about their marginalised occupation.

"Every cloud has a silver lining" may sound a weary cliche, but it is true for weavers, who after the pandemic find them-

2

GETTY IMAGES

1. *A handloom weaver in Nalgonda, Andhra Pradesh*

2. *A weaver rinsing jute fibre to let it dry under the sun*

3. *An Indian model wearing a handloom-produced garment at the Amazon India Fashion Week Autumn-Winter 2017*

3

M ZHAZO

selves—quite unexpectedly—better-placed than many other sectors of the economy. To what can we attribute this?

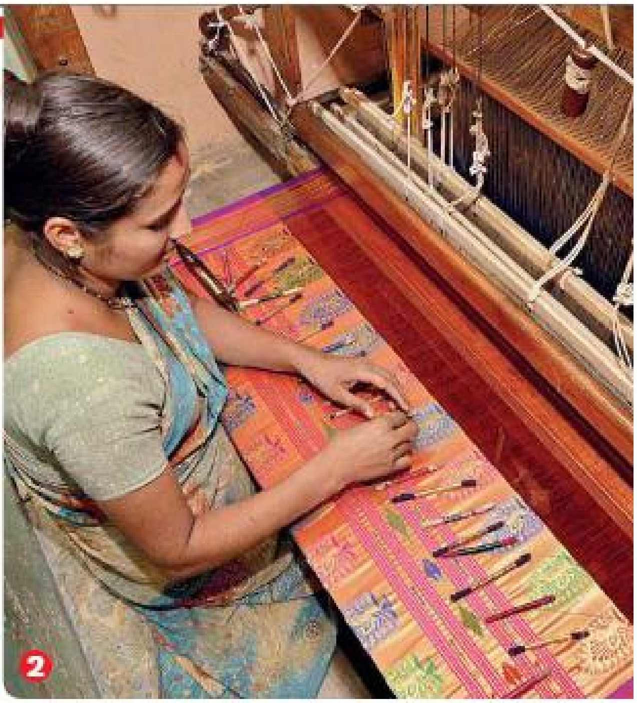
One reason is the growing access to the internet. Traditionally, craftspeople had little contact with their urban consumers. Now, thanks to the ubiquitous smartphone, they have direct access to their buyers, as well as Google, Pinterest and websites where they can check out design and product development ideas, in addition to negotiating rates, rather than being entirely dependent on ignorant if not actually exploitative middlemen. They now know the prices at which their products are being sold by others in lifestyle stores. They also have their own Facebook and Instagram pages, have learnt to handle video calls and can promote their work and take orders online. Even an uneducated craftswoman can now recognise a photo of a weave or a colourway.

Rising education levels, too, have helped. From a situation of total dependency a couple of decades ago, craftspeople now have the tools to be entrepreneurs and are in control of their lives. It's wonderful to see handloom products going beyond dingy Khadi emporiums and bureaucratic state corporations.

Even more significant than this digital transformation is their growing awareness of the value of their skills. The heartbreaking trek of migrant workers back to their villages in 2020—jobless, moneyless—made many rural artisans realise that having a unique skill and source of income in their hands, especially one that could be practised independently in their homes with minimum infrastructure, could be a great benefit. Raw materials are relatively cheap and often locally available, and a loom, though capable of delivering broad-ranging,

1. *Paromita Banerjee, 53, owner of a handloom outlet, in Kolkata*
2. *A weaver in Maharashtra working on an intricate design*

1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DEBAJYOTI CHAKRABORTY

intricate workmanship, is, after all, a simple collection of wooden strips and string. Scores of young weavers returned to previously unappreciated family occupations, and are cashing in on their new value today.

The Covid years brought economic hardship all over the world. Several international brands went out of business. With this came introspection, and consequently the consciousness about the wastefulness of mass production systems and perpetually changing fashion trends. 'Slow fashion', 'green' and 'low' carbon footprint' became desirable brand attributes. And handloom processes ticked all the boxes. Thus, the very reasons due to which handloom had become unpopular brought it into the mainstream again.

There has been a post-Covid rediscovery of handloom. This includes even traditional styles such as sarees and kurtas. It is great too to see that the young Indian male, after decades of dull, dark terylene suits and bushshirts, is embracing vibrant Indian prints again. Ikat, Shibori, block print, linen and Tussar are in demand, and Jamawar shawls and stunning Banarsi brocades are worn by both men and women. As the demand grows, so does the number of young designers and entrepreneurs who are infusing innovation and fresh ideas into old traditions.

Amid this success, however, one of the problems handloom weavers continue to face is a shortage of the right locally available raw material due to industrialisation in traditional cotton, silk and wool cultivation sectors and their high prices on account of being exported abroad. This has been partially alleviated by the development of locally grown new materials like banana, bamboo, water chestnut, nettle, etc. Though still in early stages, they have huge potential and can also generate local employment opportunities.

Last but not least, may I put in a word for humble NGOs, like my own Dastkar, which over the decades have offered weavers and other artisans constructive marketing platforms in metro cities. Some of India's most successful weaver groups, whether from Banaras, Bhagalpur or Bhujodi, first entered the urban market through Dastkar. Now, they proudly supply to the Tarun Tahilianis and Rohit Bals of the fashion world, but also keep their feet firmly on the ground, retailing directly.

Long sidelined but so full of potential, what the handloom sector needs now is investment. Only 15 per cent of Indian cloth is handloom-produced, but 95 per cent of the world's handloom is made in India. A French traveller in the 17th century had said that Indian handlooms circled the globe. How lovely it would be for this beautiful sector to do so again. ■

WHAT HELPED WEAVERS

- **Internet and social media have given them direct access to markets**
- **The 2020 migrant exodus made artisans aware of the value of having skills they could practise at home**
- **Development of new materials such as banana, bamboo, water chestnut, nettle, bark, etc.**
- **Post-Covid rediscovery of handicraft and handloom**
- **Handloom sale is no longer confined to state and Khadi emporia**
- **Growing focus on slow, sustainable fashion**
- **The emergence of NGOs has provided marketing platforms to craftspeople, enabling them to sell directly to urban consumers**
- **Designers and entrepreneurs are responding to the growing demand, and government schemes to promote the sector are helping**

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LAUNCH OF
NIC
NIGHT NAVIGATI
AND E-TICKETING

The introduction of 45 contactless services by the transport department of Assam has not only set a new benchmark in public service delivery but also saved more than 3.6 million man-days and generated economic benefit of around Rs 180 crore.

BY A SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

On September 17 this year, the day the entire country was in a jubilant mood celebrating the birthday of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, he gifted the country a path-breaking policy—the National Logistics Policy (NLP). India's logistics cost as a proportion of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) is believed to be around 13-14 per cent. The new policy not only aims to bring down that share to single digits as soon as possible but also revolutionise the transport sector. "To ensure quick last mile delivery, end transport-related challenges, save time and money of the manufacturers, prevent wastage of the agro-products, concerted efforts were made and one of the manifestations of those efforts is the National Logistics Policy," said the Prime Minister.

One of the key components of this policy is the adoption of technology to strengthen the logistic and transportation sector. For instance, the Prime Minister launched the Unified Logistics Interface Platform (ULIP) that will bring all the digital services related to the transportation sector into a single portal, freeing the exporters from a host of very long and cumbersome processes. A new digital platform—Ease of logistics Services or E-Logs—has also been launched, through which industry associations can take up any issues pertaining to operations and performance with the government.

Taking cue from the Prime Minister, 14 states, including Assam, have already formed their logistics policy. But successful implementation of the policy depends on efficient adoption of technology, particularly in the transport sector. That's the reason, the Assam government, led by Chief Minister Dr Himanta Biswa Sarma has heralded an unprecedented digital revolution in the transport sector. Today, a citizen can access almost all transport-related services at the click of a mouse, from the comfort of his or her home. "We are setting new benchmarks in efficient and hassle-free public service delivery. In pursuance of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision, all efforts are being made to minimise compliance burden for common people in obtaining government services. These online services are a step in that direction," says Chief Minister Sarma.

When Covid restrictions discouraged assembling of public, the transport department in Assam was in an urgent need to devise a process in service delivery so that people could be given the option to access to transport-related services without even visiting the DTO (District Transport Offices). Even though transport-related services through Sarathi 4.0 and Vahan 4.0—the existing processes in service delivery—were online, people still needed to physically visit the DTOs. It resulted in loss of several precious man-days, besides causing inconvenience to people. There were issues related to delay in delivery of services and lack of transparency.

Easing the processes became the need of the

10 MORE CONTACTLESS TRANSPORT SERVICES
&
ON FACILITY FOR GUWAHATI-BASED FERRY SERVICES
SYSTEM FOR DHUBRI AND SILCHAR FERRY SERVICES
by
r. Himanta Biswa
Hon'ble Chief Minister, A
in presence of
Shri Chandra Mohan P
Hon'ble Transport M
te: 19th February, 2022
Assam Administrativ
TRANS MENT

hour to ensure that people did not require to visit DTOs at all. The objective was to fulfil the motto of "Minimum Government and maximum Governance", bring in transparency and efficiency in office procedures and save precious man-days. All these requirements culminated in the development of contactless transport services in Assam with the use of technology and automation. All the people opting for any transport-related services such as issue of driving license, registration of vehicles and route permit became the main beneficiaries of these services.

Thus, in its endeavour for excellence in the delivery of citizen-centric public services through automation and use of technology in a contactless/faceless manner, the transport department, since September 3, 2021, has launched 45 services, which is the highest number of such services by any state in India. Here are the salient features of these services:

1. No need to visit DTO offices
2. Doorstep service in a hassle-free way
3. Online application from anywhere
4. Online cashless fee payment
5. Saves precious productive man-days
6. Eliminates scope of entry of any middleman, thereby bringing transparency

Use of technology helped in developing several contactless services, processes and even auto-approval in certain services such as issuing learners license and no objection certificate (NOC). Contactless services in online mode with online payment options, scrutiny, and online approval till the delivery of final output (driving licence and registration certificate in case of transport services) by post to the registered address of the applicant or the facility of downloading directly from anywhere (in case of learners license and NOC) do away with the requirement of visiting any office. It's a seamless, faceless, end-to-end service delivery mechanism, which is more responsive, transparent, and efficient.

The Aadhaar based authentication is another notable feature of some of the contactless services. The 10 Aadhar-based contactless services include six Vahan software-based services—transfer of ownership-related (of

> In pursuance of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision, all efforts are being made to minimise compliance burden for common people in obtaining government services. The online transport services are a step in that direction."
>
> **Dr Himanta Biswa Sarma**
> **Chief Minister, Assam**

A NOVEL MOVE

The CM – Transport Randomised Allocation Networked System (CM-Trans) is the most unique digital initiative of Assam government. This pioneering initiative ushers in a mechanism which not only provides online application and disposal facilities to citizens but also uniformly distributes workload among all district transport offices (DTO) to increase the speed and efficiency of service deliverance. A brainchild of Chief Minister Dr Himanta Biswa Sarma, it's the first such system launched in any state of India. The new system, launched on May 13, 2022, does away with the concept of verification and approval of applications in the same DTO where it has been submitted. Instead, it randomly allocates an application to any of the 32 DTOs of Assam based on their individual workload. The application is automatically routed to the DTOs where the pendency is comparatively less. The applicant and the DTO, in which he or she submitted the application, do not get to know which DTO has been allocated the responsibility of processing the application. This ensures complete elimination of the role of the middle men and unnecessary harassment of applicants.

788/22

THE BIG GAINS

- More than 1.2 million citizens have so far availed contactless services without visiting the DTO offices.
- 200 per cent increase in the number of issuance of learners' licence between September 3, 2021, and September 3, 2022.
- More than 3.6 million man-days have been saved due to the introduction of contactless services.
- The saving of man-days is estimated to generate economic benefit of around Rs 180 crore.

vehicle on sale or death of the owner), hypothecation cancellation, hypothecation endorsement, NOC for inter-district and inter-state transfer of vehicle from one DTO to another, change of address (of vehicle owners after taking NOC from one DTO to another), duplicate registration certificate (in case of loss, torn, mutilated)—and four Sarathi-software based services—driving license, international driving permit (to authorize Indian driving license holder to drive in another country), replacement of driving license (in case of torn or mutilated driving license), surrender of class of vehicle and driving licence extract (in case required by any agencies like the insurance investigators).

The Assam government also introduced the CM – Transport Randomised Allocation Networked System (CM-Trans) in the transport department. It is, in fact, the most unique digital initiative of Assam government. This pioneering initiative ushers in a mechanism, which not only provides online application and disposal facilities to citizens but also uniformly distributes workload among all DTOs to increase the speed and efficiency of service deliverance. A brainchild of Chief Minister Sarma, it's the first such system launched in any state of India.

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The transport department has also taken several other digital initiatives—14,500 Common Service Centres (CSC) for 40 online and contactless transport services to citizens, e-challan in all districts, online approval for vehicle scrapping and mVahan, a mobile-based app for fitness inspection and approval of commercial vehicles. As expected, this innovative system resulted in greater efficiency, transparency, and faster service delivery.

Thanks to the paradigm shift in service delivery mechanism, there has been an overwhelming public response to these contactless services. More than 1.2 million citizens have so far availed contactless services without visiting the DTOs. There is instance of 200 per cent increase in the number of issuance of learners' licence in just one year—between September 3, 2021, and September 3, 2022. It is estimated that more than 3.6 million man-days have been saved due to the introduction of such contactless services, which results in huge economic benefit to the state. The saving of man-days is estimated to generate economic benefit of around Rs 180 crore (at minimum wage for skilled workforce), a massive amount for a north-eastern state.

Nearly 400,000-500,000 people visit DTOs for the purpose of registration of new vehicles. To reduce this footfall at DTOs and to ensure ease of registration, not just dealer-point registration facility was implemented, but the automobile dealers were also empowered with the power of registering authority. Thus, Assam became the first state in the country to implement dealer point registration by empowering the automobile dealers with the power of registering authority for both in-built commercial and personalised vehicles. The dealers are also empowered to print registration certificates (RCs) so that there is no requirement to visit DTOs at all and the RCs can be printed and delivered to public at the dealer-point itself.

The contactless services also helped in pushing digital transactions in the state. Since September 1, 2020, the transport department has officially stopped collection of all motor vehicle taxes/fees in cash at all DTOs. All revenue receipts by the department since then have been issued online only. This endeavour of the transport department has resulted in generation of a total revenue of Rs 2,382 crore in the digital mode between September 1, 2020, and November 30, 2022. Through the use of technology, the scope for revenue leakage has also been considerably reduced.

The government did not stop at launching these services, but also ensured accessibility and availability of these services in every nook and

FROM MOUSE TO WHEEL

Citizens in Assam can avail these services online without visiting the transport offices

DRIVING LICENSE-RELATED SERVICES

- Issue of Learners' license
- Re-issue of expired learner's license
- Issue of duplicate learner's license
- Change of address in learner's license
- Issue of duplicate driving licences
- Renewal of driving license
- Replacement of driving licence
- Surrender of class of vehicle in driving licences
- Issue of international driving permit
- Change of address in driving license
- Driving license extract
- Duplicate conductor license
- Renewal of conductor license
- Change of address in conductor license
- Endorsement to drive hazardous material
- Mobile number update
- Issue of PSV badge
- Withdrawal of application/service

PERMIT SERVICES

- Special permit
- Temporary permit
- Periodic permit
- Duplicate permit
- Renewal of permit
- Surrender of permit
- Transfer of permit (in death case)
- Permanent surrender of permit

VEHICLE-RELATED SERVICES

- Transfer of ownership
- Hypothecation addition
- Hypothecation continuation
- Hypothecation cancellation
- Duplicate registration certificate
- Issue of no objection certificate
- Registration of fully-built transport vehicles and printing of RC by automobile dealers
- Registration of fully-built non-transport vehicles and printing of RC by automobile dealers
- Change of address in registration certificate
- Online MV Road tax/fee payment (transport/non-transport)
- PUCC late fine
- Online payment of PUCC prepaid
- Trade certificate renewal
- Registration certificate particulars
- Mobile number update
- Withdrawal of application/service
- Duplicate fitness certificate
- Duplicate trade certificate

corner of the state. To make the contactless services accessible to all, considering that digital literacy in Assam is still very low, a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was also signed with Common Service Centre (CSC), under Union Ministry of Information Technology, so that people can get their work done by visiting their nearest CSC. There is a network of about 20,000 registered CSCs in Assam.

Frequent awareness meetings with the public at grassroots level are conducted by the DTOs in cooperation with the CSCs for creating widespread awareness about the contactless services. As online application process and cashless transactions are integral parts of the contactless services, such interactions also led to digital capacity building of the stakeholders and beneficiaries. These exercises enabled them to take full benefit of the innovation. It eventually led to expansion of digital literacy as well as digital economy in the state, with considerably active involvement of public. Extensive awareness campaigns on contactless services along with its step-wise work-flows were carried out on print, television, and digital media.

To ensure timely delivery of public services, several of these contactless services were notified under the Assam Right to Public Service Act (RTPS), 2012. For Designated Public Servants (DPS), maximum stipulated time limits were fixed for delivery of these services. Penal provisions were incorporated as punishment for failure to deliver a service within the stipulated time frame. Several capacity building training programmes were also conducted for the DTOs to make them aware of the importance and necessity of delivering public services in a time-bound manner.

The time-bound service delivery will be further pushed by putting into place a monitoring system through an active grievance redressal mechanism. A social media team and a public grievance redressal cell is fully operational centrally at the office of the Commissioner of Transport. People can reach out to the transport department through a dedicated WhatsApp number (9531107518), email ID (grievance.ctassam@gmail.com) or through social media handles on multiple social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. Any grievance received through WhatsApp, email or in any of these platforms is resolved within 24 hours.

A gradual transition towards e-offices is also being considered as another step towards transparency. Already an e-office has been made operational in the Commissionerate of Transport. Such e-offices will be implemented in all DTOs in the coming days.

These endeavours are now getting national recognitions. The initiative of contactless services by the transport department, along with two other initiatives by the Assam government, won the prestigious national Award of Skoch in the category of "Transport Gold" in the year 2022. ■

By **JAYA JAITLY**

Activist, author and handicrafts curator

A SURFEIT OF RICHES

The Indian handicrafts sector, in all its inexhaustible variety, has survived many a storm

1

MANEESH AGNIHOTRI

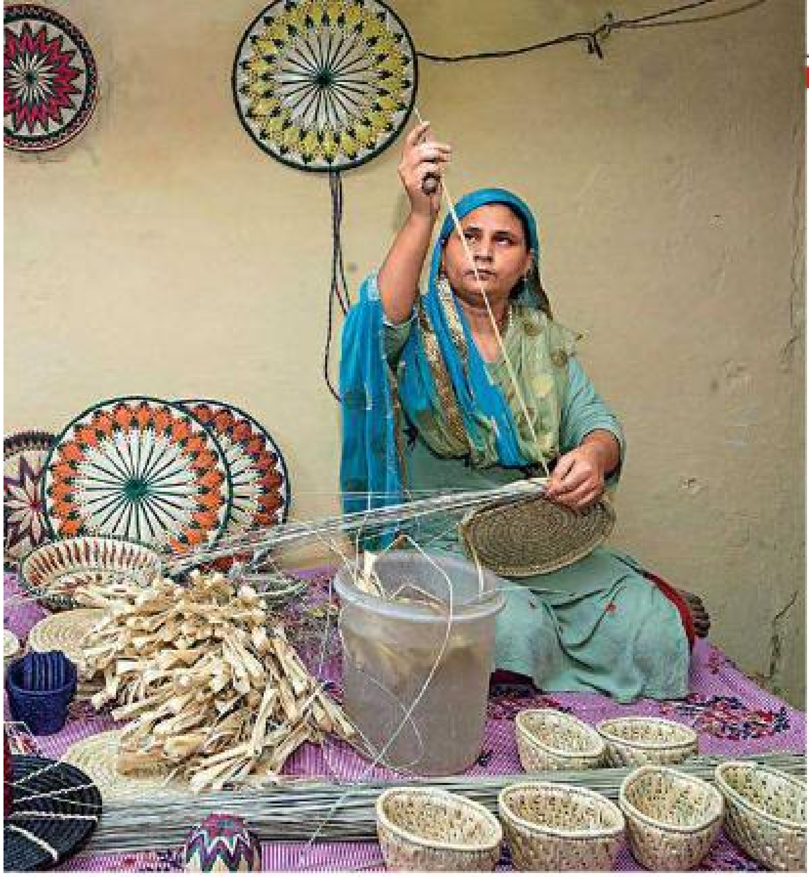
2

GETTY IMAGES

Though this essay seeks to list the most significant innovations that have taken place in India's handicrafts sector, it is difficult to paint a scene that is more like a vast ever-flowing river that constantly changes, is diminished or enriched, depending on extraneous events.

The continuing existence of a vast number of India's craft skills and traditions from the times when the Shilpa Shastra was written into the Vedas is a wondrous gift of our civilisation. This takes us millennia back from our day of Independence in 1947. The Chola and Vijayanagara dynasties paid special attention to craftsmanship as part of public expressions of their power. The Mughals infused many fine skills that were integrated into the Indian crafts vocabulary. British colonialism saw to the destruction of all hand skills that came in the way of their forceful industrial thrust. However, they recognised their worth by taking many exquisitely handcrafted objects to magnificent exhibitions in London for showing off as marvels from their territories.

In 1947, when India became free, many prominent freedom fighters—from Mahatma Gandhi to luminaries like Kamaladevi Chattopadhyay and Deen Dayal Upadhyaya—emphasised the importance of rural industries. Marketing institutions like the Central Cottage Industries Emporium and state emporia were set up in the capital, which enabled crafts from the cottage sector to become available to the urban public. Infrastructure and heavy industry were Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru's priorities, and allocations in five-year plans for the craft, handloom and khadi sector, though fairly generous in the beginning, gradually dwindled in comparison to other manufacturing sectors. Nonetheless, even as industrial goods



1. **Firoza Begum from Naini, Prayagraj, shows off her Moonj craft**

2. **Handicraft workers at the India International Trade Fair in 2019**

3. **An installation at the Mumbai airport**

4. **Craft-based furniture at the India Design Fair in Delhi in 2022**

3

RACHIT GOSWAMI

4

BANDEEP SINGH

began flooding rural markets, the government, with its subsidies and grants for the development and promotion of crafts, kept them alive. National and state awards, and later the Padma Shri and Shilp Guru status, were accorded to craftspeople.

While almost all crafts were supported and promoted only by the government, some business establishments in Kashmir, Rajasthan and Gujarat, and a few other players, had developed connections earlier with importers from abroad. Carpets, gems and jewellery were the only significant exports in the '70s. In the '80s, some state emporia came into their own. My personal experience of linking rural producers with the urban market through design and innovative marketing strategies, with the launch of Gurjari, a Gujarat state government enterprise, was a runaway success and lent inspiration to other government outlets for crafts. One of the major contributions of Gurjari in the '80s was the discovery and promotion of handblock printed textiles, tie-dye fabrics, a vast range of exquisite embroideries and weaves that even lent themselves to India's first post-Independence boutiques run by fledgling entrepreneurs. Sonia Gandhi, actors Shabana Azmi, Nina Gupta, the late Smita Patil, and Teji Bachchan, among others, were regular shoppers at Gurjari, which became the trendiest place in the capital.

By then, the National Institute of Design, set up by Pupul Jayakar and which initially aspired to focus on industrial design, began to pay serious attention to craft. The National Institutes of Fashion Technology gave a fresh impetus to crafts, under which young fashion designers soon realised that Indian craft skills were the key to creating what was innovative and uniquely Indian, while adapting to a highly contemporary form for global markets. Then, private design institutions that focused on crafts followed.

IN STEP WITH THE TIMES

- The first government of India recognised the importance of the crafts sector and accorded it generous funds
- National and state awards were instituted for craftspeople, and later, Padma Shri and Shilp Guru awards were given as well
- Craft trade fairs and tourism-oriented melas promoted international trade
- Design development and display got special attention to encourage competition in the face of branded imports
- The concept of 'Haats' helped link craftspeople directly to customers
- Private craft bazaars and government trade fairs held abroad gave crafts a wider marketing platform
- Design inputs from institutions like the National Institute of Design and the National Institute of Fashion Technology, as well as private design institutes later, helped the sector stay abreast of the latest trends
- The arrival of social media and e-commerce websites, from Amazon to 'boutique sites' dedicated to the promotion and marketing of crafts, has helped the sector expand. The government, too, has set up online marketing facilities
- Government buildings, private architects, interior designers, book illustrators, hotels and regional tourist resorts have incorporated crafts in their work, thus expanding the sector's scope

The Surajkund Crafts Mela began with a flourish in the mid-'80s. Crafts took a leap forward in the consciousness of the moneyed elite, who were put off by low-quality industrial goods by foreign brands in the 1990s. An interesting point is that far from being overshadowed by global brands, the uniqueness, diversity and kaleidoscopic nature of India's crafts offered an attractive contrast. At the ground level, India's diverse cultural practices kept local production alive.

At the risk of sounding immodest, the concept of the 'Urban Haat', introduced by me in 1994 through the establishment of Dilli Haat in the capital city gave an impetus to the idea of a permanent crafts market dedicated exclusively to craftspeople, so that they can sell their works without middlemen. Direct interaction with high-end as well as simple, middle-class city folk helped them flourish and attain recognition. The presence of crafts in such places also began to benefit trade and tourism.

General awareness about the appeal of crafts grew among government agencies as well as NGOs, designers and online managers, with a fresh emphasis on the protection of livelihoods. The culture and foreign affairs ministries made space for crafts instead of limiting it to the textile ministry.

During tough times, which were not rare, targeted relief was provided for the rehabilitation of craft communities, for example, after natural disasters such as the mega earthquake in Gujarat and the supercyclone in Odisha.

The Covid-19 pandemic deserves special mention here. The resilience of craftspeople is a lesson for everyone. While some weavers shared raw material with others and made masks for police, bank and railway personnel, craftsmen in Kutch shared produce from their fields with those running short of rations. A batik artist in West Bengal and his workers grew vegetables on his empty plot and distributed them in the neighbourhood. Traditional artists painted their old-style figures wearing masks, washing hands and using sanitiser, apart from making masks in hundreds for sale online through NGOs. Our organisation even managed to export them to London and Singapore. After the pandemic, the enthusiasm in the market for crafts at real-life bazaars was akin to water rushing through open floodgates. Dark clouds seemed to have lifted, and no one spoke of hardships. It was like a bad dream, best forgotten.

> In the '90s, as low-quality, mass-produced goods flooded Indian stores, crafts took a leap forward in the consciousness of the moneyed elite

Over the past five years, collaborations with private entities such as architects, interior designers, graphic designers, book illustrators and photographers have widened the scope for India's handicrafts, made even more accessible now through technology, internet and social media.

Generational skills, determined salesmanship, resilience and the ability to innovate and stay relevant have given crafts renewed life and vigour by attracting government attention and private entrepreneurs alike. India's craftspeople must be given the greatest credit for this renaissance. ■

SMALL TOWN TYCOONS

JAGJIT SINGH MAJHA
President of CREDAI Punjab
CO- Chairman of IGBC
CMD PCL Housing

SUCHITA OSWAL JAIN
Vice Chairman and Joint Managing Director
Vardhman Group

RAJINDER GUPTA
Chairman
Emeritus of Trident Limited.

HEMANT SOOD
Managing Director
Findoc Investmart Private Limited

SMALL-TOWN TYCOONS

A Story of North India's Top-notch Business Magnates Geared Towards Building Global Brands And Inspiring Millions

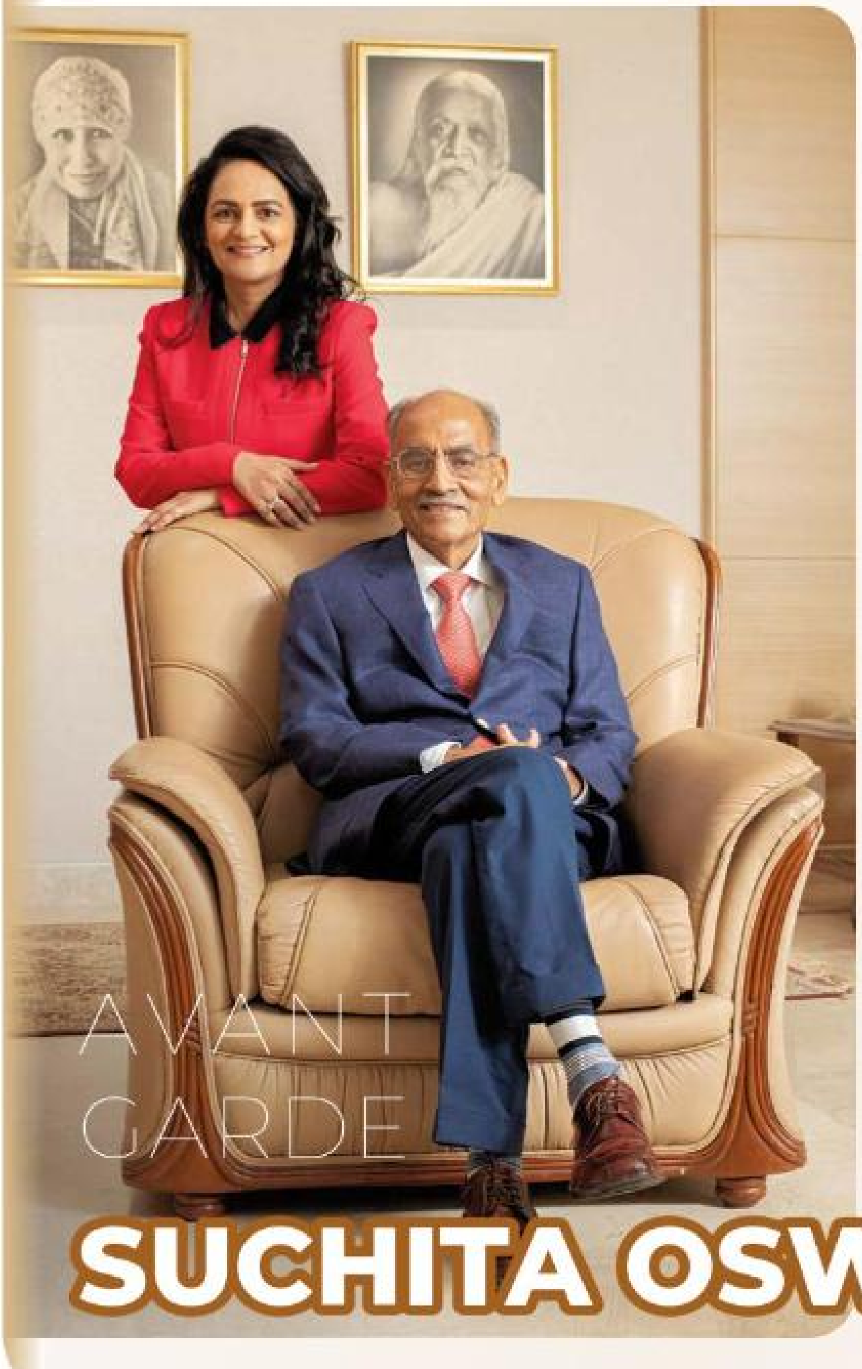
An IMPACT Presentation

SMALL TOWN TYCOONS of NORTH INDIA

Vice Chairman and
Joint Managing Director

Vardhman Group

> Ms. Suchita Oswal Jain, a third generation entrepreneur has stood true to her family's legacy as Vice Chairman and Joint Managing Director of the renowned Vardhman Group. She is the daughter of Padma Bhushan Awardee Shri S. P. Oswal, the Chairman of Vardhman Group, based in Ludhiana. He nurtured the organization to achieve the objective of establishing a world-class textile manufacturing company. Vardhman, revered highly for the work-ethics and value system has been delivering excellence since year 1965.



The billion-dollar organisation is the largest vertically integrated textile manufacturer in the country, housing the largest installed spinning capacity.

With approx. 1.2 million spindles and 1,550 looms available in its units, the Group annually manufactures 2,54,000 metric tonnes of yarn . Further, it has an annual fabric processing capacity of 180 million metres per annum. Vardhman also has 22000 tonnes annual capacity of producing acrylic fibre and a capacity of 1.8 million shirts production per annum. They are the leading manufacturers and exporters of cotton yarn from india. They operate through twenty manufacturing facilities which are strategically located across India with a total workforce of around 30,000. Ms Suchita has taken forward the legacy with the goal to scale new heights. She is primarily involved in formulating the group strategy, CSR initiatives, governance policies, corporate services and looks into new projects along with expansion plans. She has a Master's degree in Commerce from Panjab University, Chandigarh, has completed Accelerated Development Programme from London Business School and Leadership Development Programme from Insead, Paris. She joined the group in 1990 at a tender age of twenty three bringing in fresh ideas in the Group.

SUCHITA OSWAL JAIN

> We seek to achieve customer delight through excellence in manufacturing and customer service, based on creative combination of state-of-the-art technology and human resources. I believe that technological advancement is pre-requisite to sustain in an industry as dynamic as textile. Doing the right thing is one while doing it well is another.

Ever since then her initiatives are clearly reflected in the expansion of business models.

Then and Now

Vardhman has in place a strong, capable and experienced management team. The Group has also collaborated with some of the best technology players in the world and developed a strong in-house technical team that plays an instrumental role in helping the company emerge as a 'technology forward' entity.

Ms Suchita says, "Vardhman constantly strives to improve operational efficiency, increase internal wellbeing and actively contribute to our community. All this goes on while reducing our environmental footprint to sustain our business for the long term. The organization is renowned for its non-negotiable value system and ethical business dealings. We always fulfill our commitments."

One of the few vertically integrated fabric suppliers in India, VTXL is engaged in the production of fabrics for both tops and bottoms in the apparel segment, catering to large number of retailers across the globe.

The world-class wet spun technology for the manufacture of Acrylic Fiber/Tow and the highly automated production facility ranks Vardhman Acrylics Limited amongst the most advanced plants of acrylic fiber across the globe.

Vardhman's Apparels unit is equipped with world-class machines from Japan, Germany, USA, China, Taiwan and Denmark.

As one of the leading producers of Special and Alloy Steels, Vardhman Special Steels Ltd caters to a diverse requirement of hot rolled bars across industries such as Engineering, Automotive, Tractor, Bearing and Allied Industries.

Today, this group is hailed as the leader in Bi-stretch fabrics, houses the most advanced technology in the country, as one of the largest production capacities, and caters to a slew of International customers for both yarns and fabrics. All this is the outcome of years of hard work and unyielding attitude.

Milestones

Vardhman started its operations with 6000 spindles in 1965. In 1982 Vardhman group entered the manufacturing of sewing threads. In 1986, Group acquired steels unit from Mohta Industries which is now known as Vardhman Special Steels Limited. Vardhman diversified its operations from Ludhiana by entering into weaving business with a plant in Baddi, Himachal Pradesh. Later, a plant in Bharuch, Gujarat was set up by the group for production of Acrylic Fibre in 1999. The Group then decided to venture into processing of fabrics in the year 2000. The company continued to grow and established its first composite plant in Budhni with spinning , weaving and processing facilities under one roof in 2007. Garment business entry came in with manufacturing of formal shirts for men in 2011. Further increasing their spindle capacity to one million , Vardhman gained the highest spindle capacity in the country in 2013.The Group celebrated its golden jubilee in 2015. The Group continued its progress in the business world by launching a printed fabric line in Baddi, Himachal Pradesh in 2016. Vardhman group went for international collaboration when Vardhaman Special Steels Limited partnered with AICHI steel, Japan in 2019. Today, the Group employs more than 30,000 people in 20 production units spread in 5 states of India- Punjab, Himachal Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Gujrat and Tamil Nadu. They export the bulk of its production to 65 countries around the globe and their products are sold under various known branded stores. Ms Suchita says, "I believe that growth is inclusive and so should be the leadership. In practice, I involve employees as well as customers to create mutual opportunities. Feedbacks and constructive criticism is crucial to enhancing what we already offer. I advocate an open door policy where everyone is heard with same attention." Her foresight often hits the bulls eye and helps in advancing the Group's business prospects.

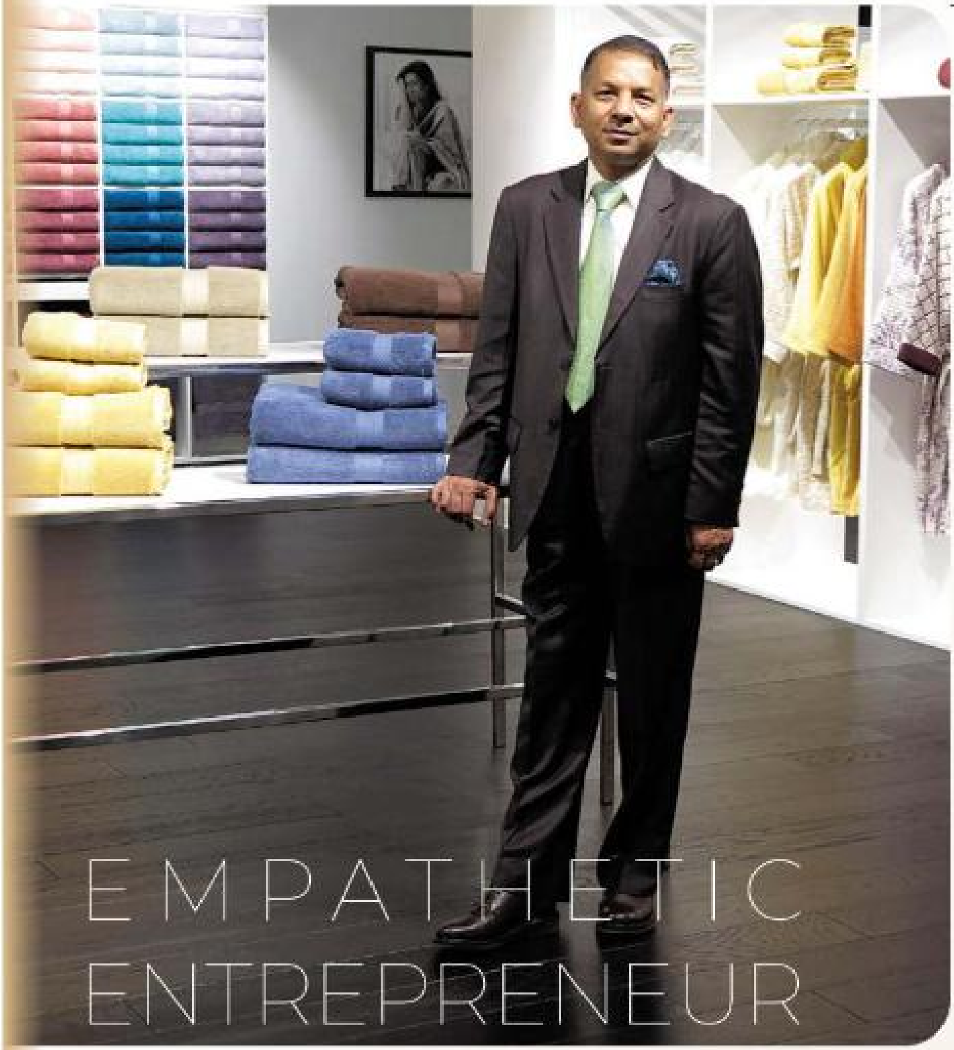
Company's Vision

Vardhman Group as a world-class textile organisation aims at producing diverse range of products for the global textiles market. Ms Suchita adds, "We seek to achieve customer delight through excellence in manufacturing and customer service, based on creative combination of state-of-the-art technology and human resources. I believe that technological advancement is pre- requisite to sustain in an industry as dynamic as textile. Doing the right thing is one while doing it well is another." When any company has such far reaching ideas which are formulated to the precision , it is obvious that the produce comes out as extra ordinary. This helps in marketing and sale of the produce that does not compromise on quality.

Plan for next 25 Years

Textile sector is under constant pressure to adapt, to grasp the future trends of the global society, which in turn makes the way forward easier. It becomes imperative to design a plan that caters to the future sustainability of the business. The Group is planning more expansion schemes and will divulge in setting up more units in related businesses in coming years.When the leadership team has such vast experience , is future oriented and forward looking , the growth is bound to happen at a fast pace.

Ms Suchita says, "Vardhman has respect, compassion and affinity for all stakeholders and we make sure to extend complete support to realise value for everybody, associated with us. My one word answer to how I achieved success is perseverance, One should never give up and keep trying until the goal is achieved. Passion is the driving force that takes you to success." With that Ms Suchita Oswal Jain signs off.



EMPATHETIC ENTREPRENEUR

SMALL TOWN
TYCOONS
of
NORTH
INDIA

RAJINDER GUPTA

Chairman
Emeritus of Trident Limited.

> It is a story of grit and determination of how a man coming from a humble background grew up to become a role model for those chasing their business dreams! He is none other than an affable Rajinder Gupta, Chairman Emeritus, Trident Limited, a man with a mission well-defined.

TRIDENTGROUP IS ALL POISED TO HOP ON TO CENTRE STAGE OF BIZ WORLD.

Rajinder Gupta, RG to his peers, has a chain of business ventures in Ludhiana, Barnala, Punjab and Budhni, Madhya Pradesh, et al. In 2022, Trident Limited's extraordinary high earnings have pushed RG's net worth to a level that has made him the richest billionaire of Punjab. His saga of success speaks volumes of his resilience and mercurial rise to attain a place of pride in the business world.

Born at the border town Bhatinda in Punjab, RG had his early education at a school run by the village gram-panchayat. A Good Samaritan took the onus of paying his monthly school fee to enable him to pursue his study at a convent school. However, he had to drop out after his 10th board exams, to support his family. "Destiny has played a significant role in shaping the course my career trajectory. I am not into business by choice, but by chance," he quips. "A good many opportunities fell in my lap and I made the best out of them. Things started falling in place and I succeeded in setting up a Sulphuric acid plant at Dhaula in Barnala, in 1985." He kicked off with a small scale business venture in fertilizer distribution, which catapulted him to the next level of scripting success stories, one after the other.

RG's mission next was to set up his own chemical industry and making forays into spinning mill industry. "Someone in the circle was toying with idea of selling his spinning mill unit. And then in the year 1992, we started our own mill at Sanghera in Barnala district" he adds.

The we-intended decision paid off. There was a visible surge in the company's growth. In 1998, chemical and co-generation of power plant in the same year and the paper unit at Dhaula in 2002 to another spinning mill in Ludhiana in 2004. More units kept adding to the tally, like Terry Towel Unit 2 in Dhaula and 2 spinning units at Sanghera in 2005-06. Buoyed by the humongous response from the clientele, the group started more spinning units at Budhni, Madhya Pradesh, be it yarn or textile, till the year 2012. The world's largest Terry Towel unit came up in 2014 at Budhni.

Continuing with the expansion spree, the TridentGroup got into print paper production. The company continues to grow by leaps and bounds.

From exporting its Terry Towels and bed linen to the USA, and more than 75 countries, the group captured the domestic market in a big way. The products are favorites with brands and online marketing portals like tridentindia.com serving all alike.

RG tells in all humility, "I always felt for my workers more than my business models. Their welfare is first and foremost to me whenever I think of new business ventures. This adds steam to their fierce dedication for work and commitment. This has resulted in enhancing productivity and, of course, giving a push to my business. It is a give-and-take situation, to say the least. Their welfare and wellbeing will always remain a top priority for me."

RG has many awards and honors in his kitty. He is the proud recipient of the coveted Padma Shree award in 2007, the country's third highest civilian award.

He is the chairman of Advisory Council of Punjab, Haryana, Chandigarh and Himachal Pradesh of the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI). He is Vice Chairman of the CII Punjab State Council, Director of Punjab Technical University and Punjab State Board of Technical Education and Industrial Training.

The premier TridentGroup has been the winner of the Wal-Mart International Supplier of the Year Award for five years in a row. The IKEA Sustainability Award (South Asia) and JCPenney Innovation Award poured in quick succession. The Company has also bagged the Texprocil Gold and Silver Awards for Highest Exports in Textiles.

RG believes in empowering his staff at the grassroots level. He prefers to recruit school dropouts and educate them and allow them to hone their skills through his innovative Takshashila Program. "It is easy to help someone financially, but what is important is to provide him/her with skills and making them employable." He adds, "Empowering our workers and offering them expertise, experience and skill development with intent to make them self-reliant is our aim. They are free to continue working with the company or seek employment elsewhere. I always motivate them to brighten up their future, be it the TridentGroup or any other concern," mincing no words, he said.

His generous hands never stop giving. He handed out sewing machines, surplus yarn and material to the needy village women, who convert the material into beautiful bags and other things of daily use. These are further beautified with embroidery designs, paints, and 'madhubani' art extra and sold as Hastkala products.

With a view to spreading education, RG has opened Sacred Heart Convent School at Barnala in Punjab, which has classes + 2. Special midday meals comprising biscuits are served to them as well as books and uniforms.

During the distressing COVID times, when various business houses and other leading establishments laid off employees, the TridentGroup went a step further - besides providing the staff with salaries, RG and his family members walked to the needy and provided them with help and care. Ration was provided to the workers and their families during the Pandemic.

Plan for the next 25 years

When asked about his plans for the next 25 years, RG says with optimum optimism, "I can say for sure that the TridentGroup is all poised to make strides in the next five years. We might also expand our operations across other states. Our sole motive is to employ people and benefit the natives of the place where we establish our projects."

A random look at the RG's business productivity graph, and we can vouch for the fact that he has created excellent products which are impeccable and durable, to say the least. Apart from that, his vision to cause a positive impact on human lives through his various endeavors is surely going to take him a long way. "I want Trident to scale newer heights of success in the times to come", he signs off.

SMALL TOWN
TYCOONS
of
NORTH
INDIA

DYNAMIC REALTOR
JAGJIT SINGH MAJHA

President of CREDAI Punjab
CO- Chairman of IGBC
CMD PCL Housing

> Jagjit Singh Majha is an entrepreneur, who is developing a 200-acre unique integrated township - PCL Gateway in New Chandigarh under the flagship of PCL Housing (Panj Darya Civic Living)

An accomplished and spirited entrepreneur, he strives to be different from the builder's segment. He says, "God has sent me here for a mission, which is to help the needy and create a platform to serve my country." Holding an emphatic feel for the settlers in his township Jagjit wants no stone unturned to give an eco-friendly environment around their homes. Planting many trees, getting parks with the flying birds keeping company and with a panoramic view of the hills his settlement is unique in more than one way. A close knit nature lover he strives to maintain the ecological balance hence is helping nature in replanting whole trees and plants where ever he can. The roadsides in New Chandigarh are a sight of perfection as the flowery bushes and tree bloom happily . He wants to preserve all the destroyed natural resources in whichever way he can . It's a treat to see how he replants the fully grown trees like Peepal and other such trees . He keeps a connection with the gardeners of the city on whatsapp and anyone pruning or cutting the trees or branches informs him and his team of restorers come into action and retrieve these tree and branches which are replanted in Jagjit's developing areas.

Then and Now

Jagjit moved around the country in his formative years with his father, who was an army officer. Finally, he completed his post-graduation in Law and Political Science at Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar.

He began his career as a lawyer in the Punjab and Haryana High Court, Chandigarh in 1993. After successfully practicing as a lead lawyer for a few years, patriotic zeal for the nation pushed him to find his true purpose: "developing an environment-friendly township. He was never a part of student politics but the humane feeling never left him and during the 1992, he, along a few friends started a blood group identification campaign , where they

> God has sent me here for a mission, which is to help the needy and create a platform to serve my country

would get the blood group tested and details kept as data to help in providing the correct group blood when needed for a patient , this was initiative taken by him alone. He also voiced the semester system to be continued in the university instead other regular testing system during his stint as a student. During Covid difficult times Jagjit went all out to help his workers or any needy person by providing ration and medical aid.

Milestones

Jagjit is the current president of CREDAI, Punjab National Zonal Secretary, North(2020-2021) and Co-Chairman of IGBC. He is a Rotarian and was part of the Rotaract youth wing, as Joint Secretary, President and as later on as District Governor. He says, "During my Rotaract period I learnt how to help the needy and got majorly into social work." He is actively involved in the NGO-Guardians of Nature Federation through which they are raising awareness about the environment and actively promoting green practices and sustainable living, healthcare, green mission and Virsa.

Company's Vision

PCL believes in the high standard of integrated development for today's India. PCL's sole aim is to provide quality and economic housing to a larger population of the country which includes masses and classes.

PCL is creating a unique market in today's competitive world, based on commitments, ethics, professionalism, and innovations with a focus on the needs of the 21st century by promoting the concept of green buildings and conserving fast-depleting natural resources.

They pioneered the era of affordable housing in the North. The plan includes a complete lifestyle real estate destination offering residential plots of all sizes, independent floors, villas, multiplexes, markets and hotels. Various parks namely, Aaroyga, Fragrance, Weather, Peacock, Eagle, Pigeon, Butterfly, Meditation etc. are developed according to the preference of the flying birds as they build their nests on a particular type of trees which are replanted and provided for them by PCL. 20 such mini jungles have been created in the township. Jagjit Singh says, "If you want to listen to the sound of birds plant a tree, don't cut it." Nearly 5 lakh trees have already been replanted and grown from cuttings of the already existing trees. Working under their slogan of Give life to plants no tree is uprooted but new trees are developed from the cutting of branches.

Rainwater harvesting plants are already in place. Experimenting with steel scrapping and tar to lay out roads are used in PCL Gateway instead of stones. This way the natural resources are preserved. Using aluminum frames in partition building and economical usage of space and form are some of the innovations PCL is introducing. Underground cables and solar lights are also included in the layout plan..

An underground storage reservoir (UGSR) and sewerage system that will last over a hundred years has been laid out . PCL is using high-quality LED street lights lumens of 110 per watt. Another achievement of PCL is that they are building a Heritage Market opposite Maharaja Yadvinder Singh Cricket stadium in the varsity of the township which will be India's biggest Heritage Market.

> We want to make buying and selling of real estate as cost-effective as possible while maintaining the highest level of service

The township has a well-planned intersection called Chandigarh Junction, which is a modernized commercial complex and sparkling entertainment hub. This retail space will be a one-stop destination for alluring shopping and leisure experiences. The structure comes with an eye-catching Spanish architectural façade so as to give that modern eye catching experience to the shoppers. A luxury that they would enjoy while shopping for the world famous brands all under one roof.

The Patiala Junction is a dynamic mix of retail, entertainment and commercial complex in the heart of New Chandigarh, near the cricket stadium on the 200 ft New Delhi- Anandpur Sahib- Manali Express Highway.

This junction will create an iconic urban destination inspired by the classic architectural style of Patiala. The services offered in these complexes are restaurants, high-brand galleries, wardrobe couture, amusement, arcade, convenience stores, supermarkets, gaming zone, food courts and cafeterias. Here, tradition will mingle with other Indian brands.

Under the Guardians of Nature Federation initiative over 5 lakh trees have been planted and monitored over the last three years and have a goal of growing 10 lakh trees by 2025.This NGO has taken of a responsibility to return the favours to nature that are found in abundance in our country. To preserve these natural resources and give shape to existing ones is the NGO's promise to our society.

It all started when Jagjit saw the severed ends of the Plumeria Albs tree by the roadside, this set in motion an idea in his mind and also became the foundation of the first campaign launched by GNF(the multiplication and Propagation of plant cuttings) with such a passiont to help his country in Jagjit, he goes about as alone warrior conducting each step to help nature multiply its resources.

Plan for the next 25 years

The present project of PCL will be developed in less than four years and then the developer in Jagjit Singh Majha looks ahead to come up with similar projects in other states all over India. His example of the present township which is being laid out in its natural habitat Jagjit sure will deliver more such habitations that will be affordable and beautifully laid out. He says, "we want to make buying and selling of real estate as cost- effective as possible while maintaining the highest level of service."

Findoc
...nancial Services Group

PHILANTHROPIST INVESTORS GUIDE

HEMANT SOOD

Managing Director

Findoc Investmart Private Limited

SMALL TOWN TYCOONS of NORTH INDIA

> Hemant Sood, Managing Director of Findoc Investmart Private Limited, is a simple and ambitious visionary who has always dared to dream big. He is a first-generation entrepreneur and angel investor based out of Ludhiana, Punjab.

Having established multiple ventures across industries, he is more than just a businessman. His success as the Managing Director of Findoc Group is a result of his futuristic thoughts and go-getter attitude.

He is also a member, of the Board of Governors, IIT Mandi and a Regular Member of YPO.

Stock Trading is his passion, and he intends to develop Algo Trading as a platform for young professionals and people having entrepreneurial skills to simplify and automate their trading journey and help them embark on a journey of wealth optimization.

His success mantra revolves around the old belief, "A satisfied customer is the best source of advertisement." That's the approach Findoc Group follows!

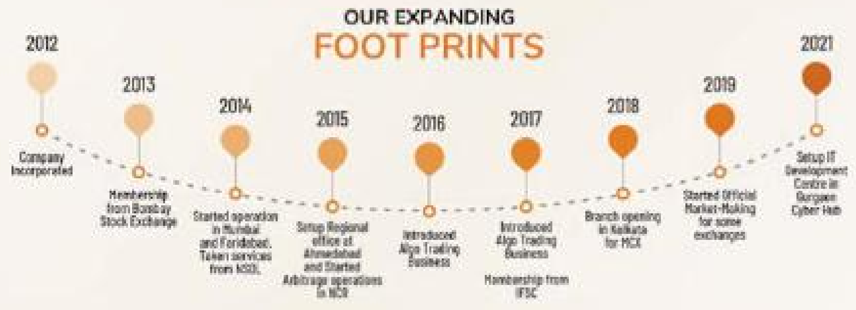
Hemant says, "I believe in continuous learning and hence got certifications in Business Management from several reputed universities like Harvard Business School and MIT Sloan School of Management. As a continuous learner, he has Executive Leadership and Customer Advantage Training from Dale Carnegie, Managing and Transforming Professional Services Study from Harvard Business School, Executive Programme in General Management from MIT Sloan School of Management, and Business management Certifications from Harvard Business School & MIT Sloan School of Management.

He specializes and has expertise in customer relationship management, team building, capital markets, management, and leadership. He adds, "My bigger purpose and passion is to serve the start-up ecosystem by helping and supporting upcoming young entrepreneurs by proving them the right tools and platform so that they can scale new heights and make a name for themselves."

His strengths lie in people management and organization building, and he is a visionary with a high-risk appetite. He has built all his business with generosity and kindness as core values. An ardent reader and traveller he explores the world to gain experience in his field and likes to watch movies in his leisure time.

Then and Now

Hemant Sood explains how and when the idea of entrepreneurship & setting up his own financial company came in. He says, "From my early school days I was full of ideas and tried my hand at my things including investing in stocks. My fascination with numbers and interest in the stock market led


OUR EXPANDING
FOOT PRINTS
2012
Company Incorporated
2013
Membership from Bombay Stock Exchange
2014
Started operation in Mumbai and Faridabad. Taken services from NSDL
2015
Setup Regional office at Ahmedabad and Started Arbitrage operations in NCR
2016
Introduced Algo Trading Business
2017
Introduced Algo Trading Business
Membership from IFSC
2018
Branch opening in Kolkata for MCX
2019
Started Official Market-Making for some exchanges
2021
Setup IT Development Centre in Gurgaon Cyber Hub

me to become a sub-broker with Angel Broking".

After gaining some experience in the field of the stock market and fulfilling his dream, Findoc came into being in 2012

Findoc is a member of all the major stock exchanges in India like the National Stock exchange Of India(NSE) Bombay Stock Exchange (BSE) Multi Commodity Exchange of India (MCX) and the National Commodity and Derivatives Exchange (NCDEX).

It provides its customers with various platforms and services to help them manage their wealth. With the advent of technology, various services like "Algo Trading" are also being offered to customers to automate their trading journey.

The company is expanding rapidly and recently opened its latest branch in Mumbai and is in the process of setting up an office in Gift City, Gujarat. It's also re-vamping its head office and state-of-the-art office with all the latest facilities and amenities for it's employees is being built in Ludhiana.

Findoc Group is also doing business through Findoc Finvest Private Limited (NBFC) for the business of Loans against Shares, Loans against Property. Some portion of the loan has also been earmarked for young entrepreneurs without any collateral on a need basis. The idea is to encourage and help these youngsters and to help society at large.

Another venture that Hemant has diversified is Hampton Homes, Ludhiana which provides affordable housing with luxury amenities to the people of Punjab at a very low cost. It is a well-planned project that provides top-class amenities like a Clubhouse, Jogging and strolling tracks, an in-house school, hospital, multiplex, outdoor sports facilities, a clubhouse, a shopping centre and a host of other facilities.

The dream was to give a "2 Minute Lifestyle" to its residents wherein all their needs are available within walking distance from their homes.

2 BHK flats were launched at a very affordable cost of 28.99 Lakhs and since this project was conceived under 'Pradhan Mantri Awasa Yojana' so the idea was to give benefits of this scheme to first-time buyers and make them even more affordable.

Hemant says, "Our architects and engineers have designed these luxury apartments which are not only cost-effective but offer an exotic living style. We wanted to give all our residents their Khusiyon Ki Chabi"

Milestones

Findoc under Hemant's leadership has bagged many awards and accolades. Findoc won the NSDL Star Performer Award in 2016 and repeated it in 2019. Findoc Commodities were recognized by NCDEX with Krishi Award in 2021

NSDL STAR PERFORMER AWARD 2019

NCDEX KRISHI AWARD

MCX LEADING MEMBER IN AGRICULTURAL SECTOR AWARD

It has been awarded by many mutual fund houses like Aditya Birla Group, ICICI Prudential, and Tata and SBI Mutual Funds for outstanding performance.

Recently it was also awarded by MCX as a Leading Member in the agricultural segment.

It also hosted 2 successful events called "Traders for Life" in Gurgaon and "Treasury Management" in Ludhiana.

"Traders for Life" was a two-day residential event, and the idea was to have a brainstorming session with the trading community and various stakeholders on the latest trends and technologies in trading and to network for better collaborations and partnerships.

"Treasury Management" was a single-day program done in Ludhiana wherein we invited various corporates including their teams from the financial domain. Various eminent speakers and panellists were invited so that they can apprise the audience of various ways & means to invest their money and manage their treasury income.

Similar and many other events are being planned for the future also.

Philanthropist

Mr. Hemant Sood also believes in giving back to society and has been involved in a host of CSR activities and has been serving as a trustee of an NGO called "Samvedna Trust" from 2014 to 2019 and as a president from 2019 onwards.

There are various services are being provided by this NGO. Currently, 11 ambulances are operational which operate 24*7 and helped to shift around 40 thousand patients and more than 15 thousand dead bodies. The Trust also provides infrastructural support to the Civil Hospital, Ludhiana.

Trust under his leadership is also sponsoring school education for 82 needy students and also providing games and play materials to the Correction home in Ludhiana.

Covid -19 saw the empathetic Hemant go all out to provide 65 staff members to the Civil Hospital, Ludhiana for four difficult months.

He arranged daily cooked food for 4,000 people per day for 58 days. Over 230 Covid Vaccination camps all over Ludhiana were arranged, providing 1,01,000 vaccination doses. Blood donation camps were also conducted.

The Trust has been awarded the State Award by the CM of Punjab and another by The Health Minister of Punjab. The trust has also bagged an appreciation Award from PSACS, the Corona warrior award by Dainik Jagran, Bhartiya Janta Party and won appreciation from Amitabh Bacchan in KBC.

Plan for the next 5 years

Hemant says, "I want to provide state-of-the-art services and platforms which can be customized as per needs of the user that will help them to manage their wealth better. In the next three to four years, we plan to get listed"

Findoc looks ahead to expand its services in the South Indian states like Hyderabad, Bengaluru, and Chennai. Along with local presence, we also have ambitions to go global and many initiatives have already started around the same.

The dream is to see Findoc as one of the top 10 places for customers to create their wealth.

SMALL TOWN TYCOONS NORTH

T

The word tycoon itself brings an aura surrounding it. Tycoons bring in the thoughts of rich industrious mainly businessmen who have fortunes

cornered away in their closets and living a fairytale life in metros of India, be it the IT hub of the country, Bengaluru or the dazzling lifestyle of financial capital and filmy Mumbai or even the techno modern city of Gurugram. A UK-based research group, Hurun India Rich list of 2022, reveals that India's Rich are those whose net worth exceeds Rs1,000 crores and has grown ten-fold to 1,036 individuals in the past decade alone. Another striking point is that out of 178 businessmen so mentioned in the research papers over 60 of them are based in small towns and cities. Setting up businesses in rural and small cities is empowering the local population. The businesses so perceived and incorporated can get local skilled labour of expertise and knowledge due to the setting up of engineering, medical and polytechnics in these far-flung areas. These have mushroomed in these areas so supplying to the local industry. Employees are also happy to get experts within their radius rather than eyeing the IIT and IIM. Over 230 such education hubs have emerged across India post-liberation in the early 1990"s. There are over 3,000 incubation centres across the country, helping new businesses stand independently. These rural places help businesses to acquire large land space at a lower price rather than in prominent cities. The small towns are soon transformed with the new settlement of staff workers of these business establishments. New structures in housing, malls, schools and healthcare come up giving the opportunity to realtors to develop new housing projects for business officials. The new scale in the urbanization of the area speaks of world-class structures. Developers like Jagjit Singh Majha comes up with a 200-acre housing complex wherein he provides the green building with open spaces to live in a free air and cleaner environment in New Chandigarh. A revolutionary dream that each dweller dreams of when he lives amongst birds, trees, lush green parks, luxury and daily needs all catered for nearby plus modern housing structures that are cosy and comfortable at an affordable rate. Hampton Homes, in Ludhiana, also speak of offering affordable housing with all facilities that one can think of. Hemant Sood, Managing Director of Findoc Investmart Private Limited, based in Ludhiana is coming up with these homes. His own parent company caters to investment guidance and has branches all over the North and soon to be brought in the south as well.

Rajinder Gupta, RG to his peers, has a chain of business ventures in Ludhiana, Barnala, Punjab, and Budhni, Madhya Pradesh, et al. In 2022, Trident Limited's extraordinarily high earnings have pushed RG's net worth to a level that has made him the richest billionaire in Punjab. His saga of success speaks volumes of his resilience and mercurial rise to attain a place of pride in the business world. By giving employment to a large rural population the Group earns the goodwill and blessings of the local people.

Meanwhile, Vardhman Group has emerged as a reliable and famous business model and under the young dynamic leadership of Suchita Oswal Jain the group surges ahead of the rest and wins hands down as the leading industrial magnates. Starting operation in 1965 with just 6,000 spindles, Today, the Group employs more than 30,000 people in 20 production units spread over 5 states of India- Punjab, Himachal Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat and Tamil Nadu. They export the bulk of their production to 65 countries around the globe and their products are sold under various known branded stores. They are looking ahead to more expansions and are going for foreign collaborations for better production. Punjab ranks 13th among 20 states and union territories in the country. Neighbouring Haryana is five ranks ahead, at the 8th position, with 29 industrialists from the state. As many as 18 of them are from Gurugram.

While Gupta, who recently stepped down from the board of directors of Trident Group citing health and family issues, ranks 127th in the country, SP Oswal of Vardhman textiles stands second in Punjab with wealth totalling ₹4,600 crores. Oswal ranks 349th in the country.

"India is seeing a very exciting phase, where innovation is moving deeper into the country, beyond the metros and Tier 1 cities, " says Vikram Gandhi, a senior lecturer at the Harvard Business School. This holds true as we explore and find the flourishing businesses in small towns as compared to collapsing and polluted cities. As the decade unfolds more businesses and India's rich will come from towns rarely heard of. Herein explore the small town tycoons with us as we unfold some of them in the North.

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QUALITY AND AFFORDABLE MEDICINES FOR ALL

AN INITIATIVE OF ZEELAB

Zeelab Pharmacy was commenced with an aim to provide high-quality and inexpensive medicines to the people, making medical care easy for every segment of the society. In addition, it has created employment opportunities for the entrepreneurs. It is a matter of great pride that having been launched in 2019, the Scheme has successfully completed three years.

If we speak of modern- day India, it has become extremely difficult for a common man to afford medical facilities which in turn takes a toll on their health. A large part of the populace has to leave the treatment mid-way owing to the expenses incurred on medicines. Even a common ailment means going to the doctor, paying the hefty fee and buying expensive medicines. This creates a dent in the pockets of people with an average income and becomes just impossible for the poor and have nots. It is sad yet true that out of the total cost of the treatment almost 70 % goes in the medicines. The reason being; majority of the doctors prescribe the patent brands in medicines that are highly priced owing to the expenditure that the companies incur in their promotions through advertisements.

So as to give respite to the poor and downtrodden in the healthcare sector, Zeelab Pharmacies have been commenced in various districts. The department of pharmaceuticals under the Ministry of Chemicals and Petro-Chemicals has come a long way in providing high- quality and low-priced medicines medicine to the people.

Motive Behind The Scheme

1. Ensuring availability of good and cost-effective medicines to every segment of the society, especially to the poor and deprived.
2. Creating awareness amongst people about the effectiveness of "generic" medicines at par with the "big-brand" medicines.
3. Increasing employment opportunities by inviting entrepreneurs to open more Zeelab centres.

Advantages Of The Scheme

The medicines provided under the scheme are not just easy on the pockets of the people but they are as effective as the highly priced "branded medicines". Most importantly, people especially the underprivileged are able to afford these medicines and are able to complete their treatment.

Journey of Zee Lab

ZEELAB has opened more than 1500 stores across India which has helped people in saving Rs 500 crore in their healthcare expenditure. Zeelab is expanding its online presence at a fast pace. In Delhi, Zeelab delivers medicines at the doorstep within 2 hours. In a recent mission, Zeelab in order to address the mental health issues has made provision for a psychiatrist on WhatsApp number 7437099999 for patients to share their concerns.

Service Cum Employment

The scheme is not just about doing a service to the humanity by providing good quality medicines on nominal rates but is also creating employment opportunities. This initiative has led to the emergence of dedicated stores for dispensing generic medicines with the help of public participation. The scheme has helped in serving the poor and needy which goes well with the tagline of Zeelab Pharmacy.

Ensured easy availability of sanitary napkins for women

Taking into consideration the health and hygiene of Indian women, Zeelab pharmacy has been elemental in providing sanitary napkins to the women. Zeelab Pharmacy has constantly worked towards the realization of its dream to make healthcare services available for women irrespective of their economic status. This is a giant step towards "CLEAN" and "GREEN" India which has helped citizens in saving Rs 500 crore.

Key Advantages

This scheme is functional under the Public- Private Partnership wherein individual entrepreneurs join hands with government agencies.

a) Zeelab Pharmacy Medicines are dispensed at 50-90 % lesser rates as compared to the branded medicines sold in the markets
b) To ensure the quality, the medicines are manufactured in WHO approved plants certified with good manufacturing practices
c) Every medicine is tested for its efficacy in the warehouses before being supplied

User Friendly Mobile App

Zeelab Pharmacy Mobile Application has various user- friendly options which includes searching the nearest pharmacy on Google Map and comparing the rates of branded and generic medicines.

In real sense of the word, Zeelab Pharmacy has come to the rescue of poor, deprived and terminally ill patients looking for easy availability of medical treatment through good and inexpensive medicines. This all-encompassing initiative of Zeelab Pharmacy has provided high-efficacy medicines at low rates to the people in the country thereby fulfilling its promise to contribute towards making India a Happy and Healthy nation.

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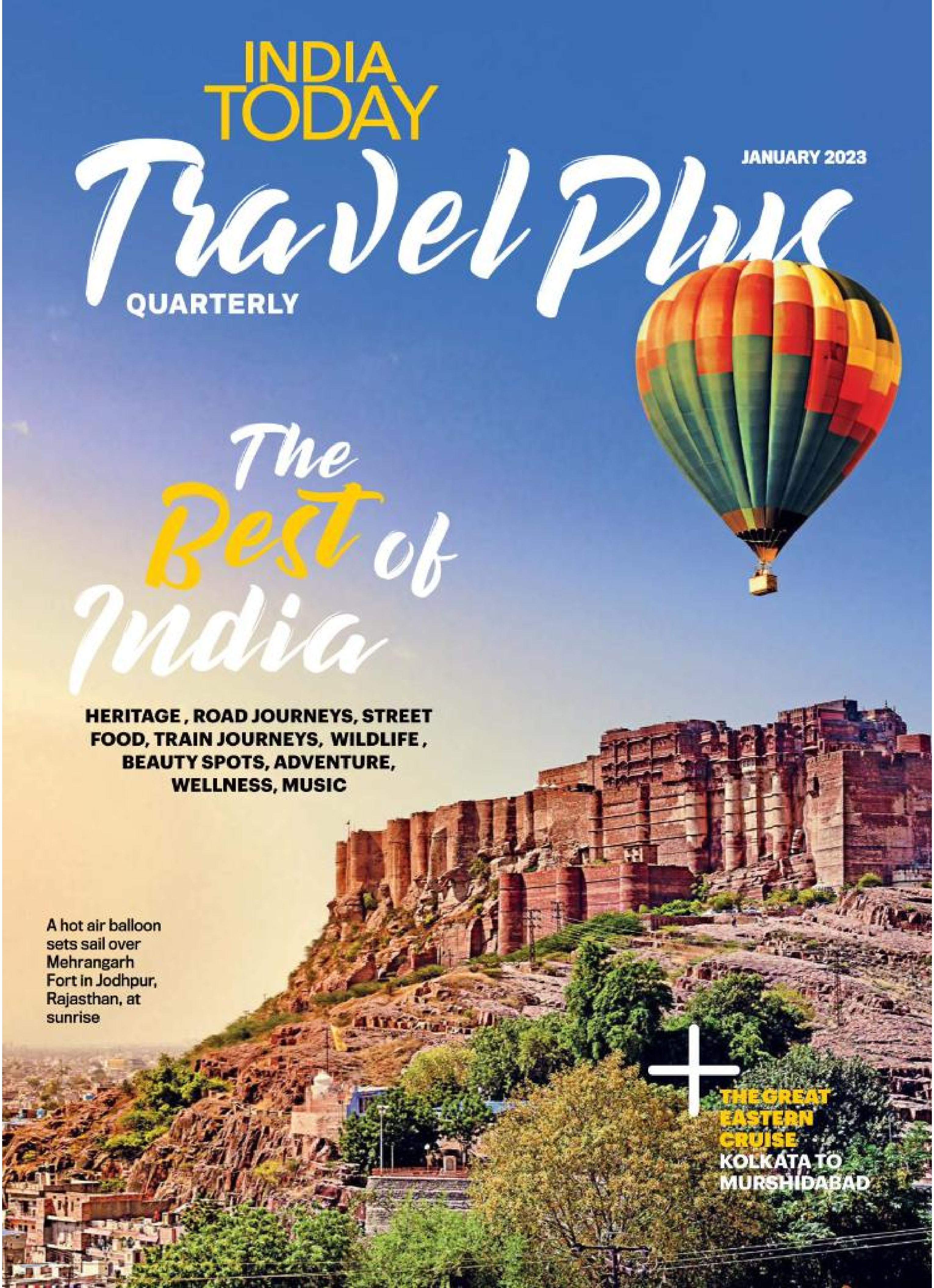
INDIA TODAY

Travel Plus

QUARTERLY

JANUARY 2023



The Best of India

HERITAGE , ROAD JOURNEYS, STREET FOOD, TRAIN JOURNEYS, WILDLIFE , BEAUTY SPOTS, ADVENTURE, WELLNESS, MUSIC

A hot air balloon sets sail over Mehrangarh Fort in Jodhpur, Rajasthan, at sunrise

+

THE GREAT EASTERN CRUISE
KOLKATA TO MURSHIDABAD

SUBIR HALDER

A Fairytale Christmas

Christianity was first introduced to India in 52 CE by none other than the apostle Thomas, who landed on the Malabar coast to spread the gospel. Two millennia on, there are Christmas celebrations across India—including a moving midnight mass at San Thome Basilica in Mylapore, Chennai, which still holds a few of St Thomas's srelics.

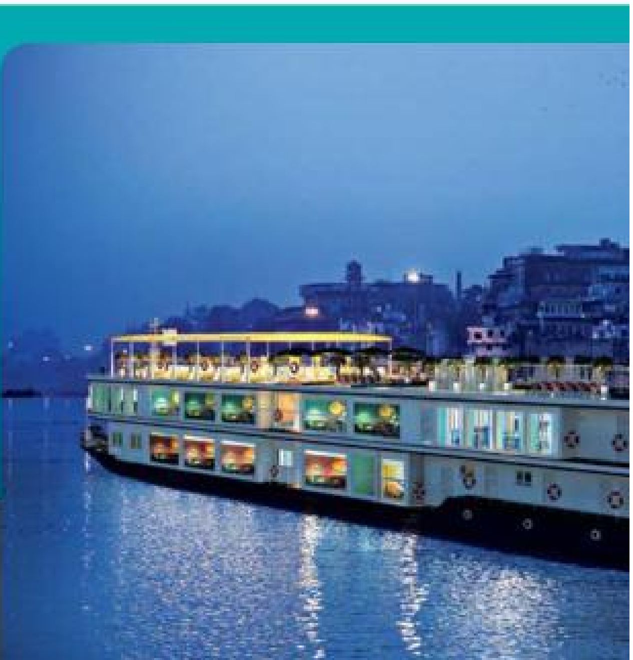
The city that goes to town with Christmas is Kolkata, from midnight mass at St Paul's Cathedral to carol singing, plum cakes and much merrymaking. The **Park Street Christmas Festival** sees the entire road lit up with fairy lights. There's a giant Christmas tree for those Insta-worthy shots and even a Christmas Parade. The special Christmas menu at Flury's is not to be missed. Equally festive are the Bow Barracks, home to the city's Anglo-Indian community.

Goa, with its plethora of beautiful churches, is another hotspot, and the year-end holiday destination of choice. The Basilica of Bom Jesus in Old Goa is a must-visit on Christmas, as is the Latin Quarter of **Fontainhas** in Panjim. In Mumbai, the 'village' of Matharpacady or Mazagon is home to the East Indian Catholic community and sees traditional Christmas festivities. For a Northeastern twist to Christmas, don't miss Meghalaya's capital Shillong. It's home to the world-famous **Shillong Chamber Choir** and you wouldn't want to miss their soulful hymn singing.

Such a Long Journey

Come January and the world's longest river cruise will chug off on its 4,000 km journey from the holy city of Varanasi. The **Ganga Vilas Cruise**, being operated by Antara Cruises, will travel from Varanasi to Dibrugarh, via Kolkata and Dhaka.

Sarbananda Sonowal, the Union minister of ports, shipping and waterways, announced the cruise recently. The riverine journey will last a total of 50 days, cover 27 river systems and more than 50 tourist sites, including several World Heritage Sites, revealed the minister. The cruise will also take in the spectacular natural vistas of the



Soul Music

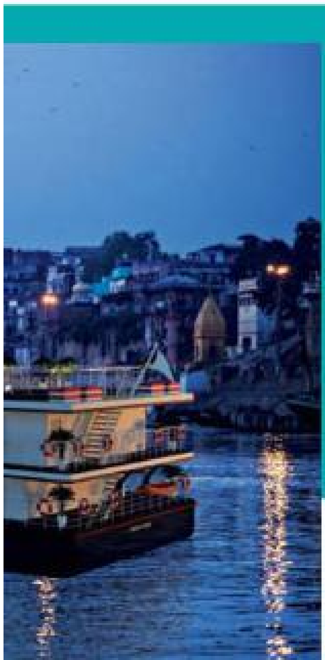
NEIL GREENTREE

One of the most soulful events in Jodhpur's cultural calendar, the **Sacred Spirit Festival** is returning from February 10 to 12, 2023. With Sting and Maharaja Gaj Singh II of Jodhpur as its patrons, and presented by the Mehrangarh Museum Trust, the festival will bring together musical talent from all over the world and showcase the spiritual significance of music transcending communities, cultures, and creeds. The aim of the festival is to highlight soulful music that inspires and awakens the divine in us. During the festival, the magnificent Mehrangarh Fort will reverberate with musical strains filled with ecstasy, joy and euphoria.

Frozen in Motion

SHUTTERSTOCK

The Chadar Walk is so last decade. On February 20, 2023, the Adventure Sports Foundation of Ladakh will host the **Pangong Frozen Lake Marathon**. Possibly the world's highest marathon, the 21-km run will raise awareness about climate change and global warming. They're calling it 'The Last Run'. Bleak humour offers cold comfort, but there's an air of finality about melting glaciers, so harsh words may just cut the ice.



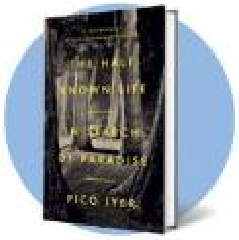
Kaziranga National Park and the Sunderbans delta.

The cruise has been made possible under the Indo-Bangladesh Protocol Route, which has already facilitated trade and transit channels connecting India and Bangladesh on the Ganga and Brahmaputra rivers. Commencing on January 10, 2023, the cruise is expected to reach Bogibeel in Assam's Dibrugarh district on March 1. It will travel approximately 1,100 km in Bangladesh.

BOOKS

Armchair travel

Travel the world from the comfort of your couch



THE HALF KNOWN LIFE

In Search of Paradise

by Pico Iyer
PENGUIN RANDOM HOUSE
$26; 240 pages

Travelling from Iran to North Korea, from the Dalai Lama's Himalayas to the ghostly temples of Japan, Pico Iyer brings together a lifetime of explorations to upend our ideas of utopia

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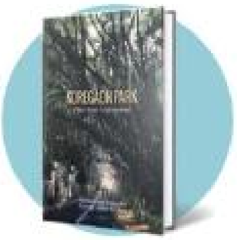

KOREGAON PARK

Pune's Iconic Neighbourhood

by Vinita Deshmukh (author) and Suresh M. Talera (concept)
AuthorsUpFront
₹ **2,000; 100** pages

An in-depth guide and immersive history lesson that showcases what is certainly Pune's most iconic (and posh) neighbourhood, which the British started developing in the 1920s

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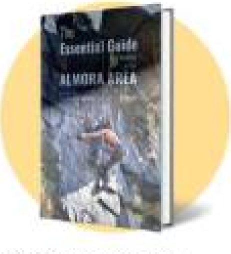


THE ESSENTIAL GUIDE TO CLIMBING IN THE ALMORA AREA

Volume I

by Siddhartha Chattopadhyay
SELF-PUBLISHED
₹ **1,200; 140** pages

Packed with QR codes to help you locate the best rocks and crags to climb in the Almora region, this is the first such guide to emerge out of Uttarakhand.

UNFORGETTABLE WEDDINGS IN GOD'S OWN COUNTRY

kerala
God's Own Country

> *If you want a wedding whose memory you will cherish for the rest of your life, come to Kerala—and leave the details to the experts.*

Few destinations in India can match the sense of romance that the tropical paradise of Kerala evokes. From the sun-kissed beaches to the dreamy backwaters and the dreamy hills, Kerala has it all. And when you are in one of India's most romantic destinations, can wedding bells be far behind?

Kerala is an idyllic location to plan your nuptials. It provides a variety of experiences and settings to make your wedding truly special. From beaches and backwaters to rolling hills, Kerala is one of a kind—a land of stunning diversity. It boasts a scenic coastline, which runs the entire length of the state and is lined with white, sandy palm-fringed beaches. Kerala is known all over the world for its beautiful backwaters, a unique experience like nothing else. And nothing says romance quite like the mist-laden hills of Kerala.

Known for its great culinary offerings and long expertise in hospitality, Kerala has all the bases covered when it comes to pulling off the perfect wedding.

Nor has Kerala ignored the practical aspects of wedding planning. Connectivity is key, with wedding guests likely arriving from all over the world. With three international airports—Thiruvananthapuram, Kochi and Kozhikode—and a good rail network, Kerala is easily accessible.

So, what are you waiting for? Just take the plunge. And leave all the details to the experts, so that in the process of tying the knot, you don't get tied up in knots.

A Wedding on the Backwaters

The backwaters are Kerala's most unique geographical feature, consisting of an extensive network of lagoons, lakes, estuaries, and canals and the houseboats gliding on the waters are unmissable. This one is sure to be a hit with the wedding party, from floating mandaps to lakeside receptions.

Kumarakom: This is an enchanting village on the banks of Vembanad Lake. Wedding guests can be accommodated in houseboats or one of the many luxury resorts. With air-conditioned bedrooms, modern toilets and on-board staff to attend to your every need, the Kerala houseboats are an unforgettable experience. Kumarakom itself offers multiple wedding and honeymoon venues.

Alappuzha: Possibly the most popular backwaters destination in Kerala, Alappuzha or Alleppey is a veritable waterworld and a wedding here is bound to be an unforgettable event. There are numerous innovative options including a floating wedding floor that can accommodate a party of up to 300 guests. Alappuzha is also great for a post-wedding getaway.

Ernakulam: Kerala's version of a metro city, Ernakulam is all about convenience but without compromising on aesthetics or dramatic natural settings. As the commercial capital of Kerala, it offers excellent connectivity, communications facilities, and modern amenities. It also offers a variety of sightseeing options in close proximity like Vypeen Island, Mattancherry, Fort Kochi, Bolgatty Island, and so on.

Poovar: A tropical paradise along the backwaters of Kerala, Poovar is unique in its ability to offer the most dramatic locations for weddings—flanked as it is by the Arabian Sea on the East and the majestic Ghats on the West. The bride and groom get to exchange vows among the golden sands, swaying palms, emerald backwaters, crimson sunsets and the ultramarine of the ocean. What more could a couple about to be married wish for?

The Classic Beach Wedding

With a coastline stretching nearly 600km, the state of Kerala is one long beach. The white, sandy beaches, lined with coconut palms, ooze atmosphere and charm. Some are overlooked by lighthouses, others by old forts with a storied past, and are the perfect setting for the dream wedding you have been planning. Of course, the stunning photo-ops provided by the dramatic sunsets are the icing on the cake.

Kovalam: Being near the capital city of Thiruvananthapuram, this beautiful, palm-fringed beach simultaneously offers great connectivity and seclusion. It is suitable for both intimate wedding ceremonies and more elaborate affairs given the huge room inventory here.

Bekal: North Kerala has some of the most beautiful and pristine beaches in the state. A strategic military outpost in ancient times, the quaint little town of Bekal in Kasaragod, Kerala's northernmost district, is dominated by the impressive Bekal Fort. The fort overlooks the beautiful Bekal Beach, the perfect setting for a dream wedding. Bekal is easily accessible from both Kannur and Mangalore airports.

How About a Wedding in the Hills?

Weddings are one of the great highs of life, so why not take them to a height quite literally? After all, Kerala boasts some of the most scenic and dramatic hill country in India. Kerala's hill stations lie in the cosy folds of the Western Ghats, wrapped in rarefied air and rolling mists.

From tea trails to trekking, to boating, there is so much to do here that can help couples bond and get close to each other. And when it's the hills, romance is always in the air.

Munnar: Nestled in the Western Ghats at a balmy altitude of 1,600 metres above sea level, the hill station of Munnar is the tea capital of Kerala. Since Munnar is also a popular and well-connected tourist destination, these picturesque hills are dotted with plush resorts which are perfect for pulling off a wedding celebration. Horse rides in the hills, bonfires in the cool evenings and cuddling come with the territory.

Wayanad: With an extremely low population density, the magical hills of Wayanad in North Kerala are noted for their unspoilt beauty. Nature is in its wildest element here, with luxurious forests, spice plantations and imposing mountains. It does not get much more romantic than this. The resorts are cosy and the hills seem perennially wrapped in mists. Wayanad has a dreamy vibe—and it's perfect for that honeymoon after.

As you can see, Kerala offers options galore for the perfect wedding, and has something for every sort of preference. If you want an unforgettable wedding, come to God's Own Country. No one does weddings better than us.

Once Upon a River

A river cruise from West Bengal's present capital to a former one reveals surprising chapters from Indian history to the delight of modern travellers

By Prannay Pathak

RAJMAHAL
RAJM

INDRANEEL MAJUMDAR

Heart of Darkness. Three Men in a Boat. Siddhartha—some of the most moving and memorable stories I've had the pleasure of reading are all about rivers, the courses they run, the places they go to and the travellers they take along. These journeys are often revelatory, sometimes shocking but always awe-inspiring.

Earlier this year, on one monsoon evening, I ambled along a muddy path splitting bright jute fields in a village, unaware of its beleaguered past. A few hundred metres away stood the memorial to the most unforgettable skirmish in Indian history, now subject to wiry 20-somethings toting chunky cameras. It was here in the year 1757 that Nawab Siraj-ud-Daulah, betrayed by his commander Mir Jafar, lost to the East India Company's forces in a round of fighting that, as tour guides often like to add, lasted less than 40 minutes. This watershed event that played out at the banks of the Bhagirathi in Palashi—Plassey in history books—brought about the eventual installation of British rule in India.

The fact that the shift of the river has caused the actual battlefield to partially wash away notwithstanding, Palashi, named after the flame tree that grows here, looked blissfully underwhelming, a scruffy recluse that has long cast off the weight of history. I happened to witness it on the 'Historic Hooghly', a journey along the Ganga in West Bengal, aboard the *ABN Rajmahal*, operated by the pioneering river cruising company Assam Bengal Navigation.

A GANDER AT INDIA'S FIRST CANTONMENT TOWN

Having landed in Kolkata the night before and experienced

AHAL
RAJMAHAL
WB

some fine hospitality at the Glenburn Penthouse, one of the most coveted upscale boutique addresses in town, I set off for Outram Ghat in the morning. We checked in and freshened up with the wet towels and welcome coolers arranged by the nimble staff, before climbing up on the partially shaded sundeck for a round of introductions.

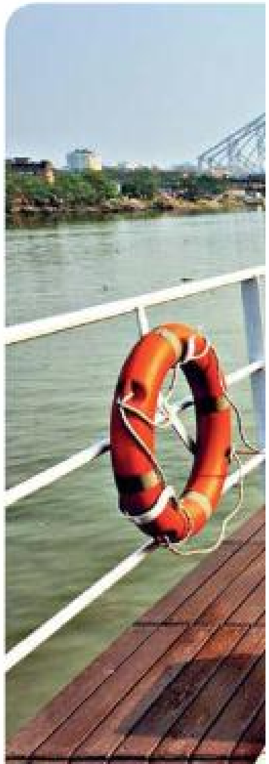
As she journeyed upstream, the *Rajmahal* sailed under one metal bridge after another, and the group's glee reached an all-time high when the colossal Howrah Bridge—the enduring Calcutta icon—materialised in the offing. In a few minutes, the ship slid under it as both sets of travellers—those passing on the bridge and those planted on the boat's terrace, gazed at the other in primordial wonder.

Five hours or so passed, and we hopped off the boat to explore Barrackpore—India's first cantonment town. Before the British discovered and made Shimla their summer capital in 1864, Barrackpore was their favourite hot weather retreat. We disembarked near Mangal Pandey Park (locally known as Latbagan) and set off for a tour of the cantonment, sauntering past reminders of British rule such as the sprawling Flagstaff House, a pre-telegraph-era semaphore tower that looked like a riverside lighthouse, and the Temple of Fame, a handsome cenotaph in the Roman style installed by Lord Minto to honour British soldiers who died in the 1810 conquest of Java. I later learned that the Barrackpore Park close to the bank was where Lady Canning, India's first vicereine and a prolific painter, was buried.

A MARRIAGE OF FRANCE AND BENGAL

Much like Palashi, the carefree and youthful Chandannagar has redefined history in its own way. The following morning, we left our ship moored in the middle of the Hooghly, boarded the ferry and stepped into the former French colony. Also called Chandernagore/ Chandernagor (though this is frowned upon, I learned), this eclectically arranged town with vibrant houses and French blinds remained under the European power's control until the early 1950s. Yet today, it seems happy to interpret in its own way the vestiges of French imperialism that continue to attract travellers. From The Strand, the loftily named riverside promenade where plaques stand dedicated to Bengali gentlemen with names like Dourga Chorone Roquitte, and the Dupleix House, which now functions as a museum, to the various French-established educational institutions, the town betrayed not one fleck of self-doubt.

As the Kanailal Dutta School in the main thoroughfare celebrated a jubilee year, the whole town seemed occupied with festivity, and soon a school procession rolled past the Sacré



Cœur—yes, the Chandannagar Sacred Heart Catholic Church—with great pomp and ceremony. The blush-red Rabindranath Tagore statue right across the road certainly didn't seem to mind. Gurudev, rumour has it, wrote parts of *Gitanjali*, his Nobel-winning book of poems, in a house nearby.

Most people think of Lucknow when they hear 'Imambara', but as we sailed upstream, past the former Dutch settlement of Chinsurah, we were told that there was one very close. Raised in 1861 from a hefty sum donated by Haji Muhammad Mohsin, a noble philanthropist of Persian origin, the complex is still impressive—an imposing clock tower and beautiful prayer hall, and courtyard and corridors.

VIEW FINDER
(Clockwise from left) Loungers look out to the riparian countryside; the ABN *Rajmahal* passes a number of bridges in the first leg; Nizamat Imambara at the Hazarduari Palace

THE BURDEN OF A PRESTIGIOUS LEGACY

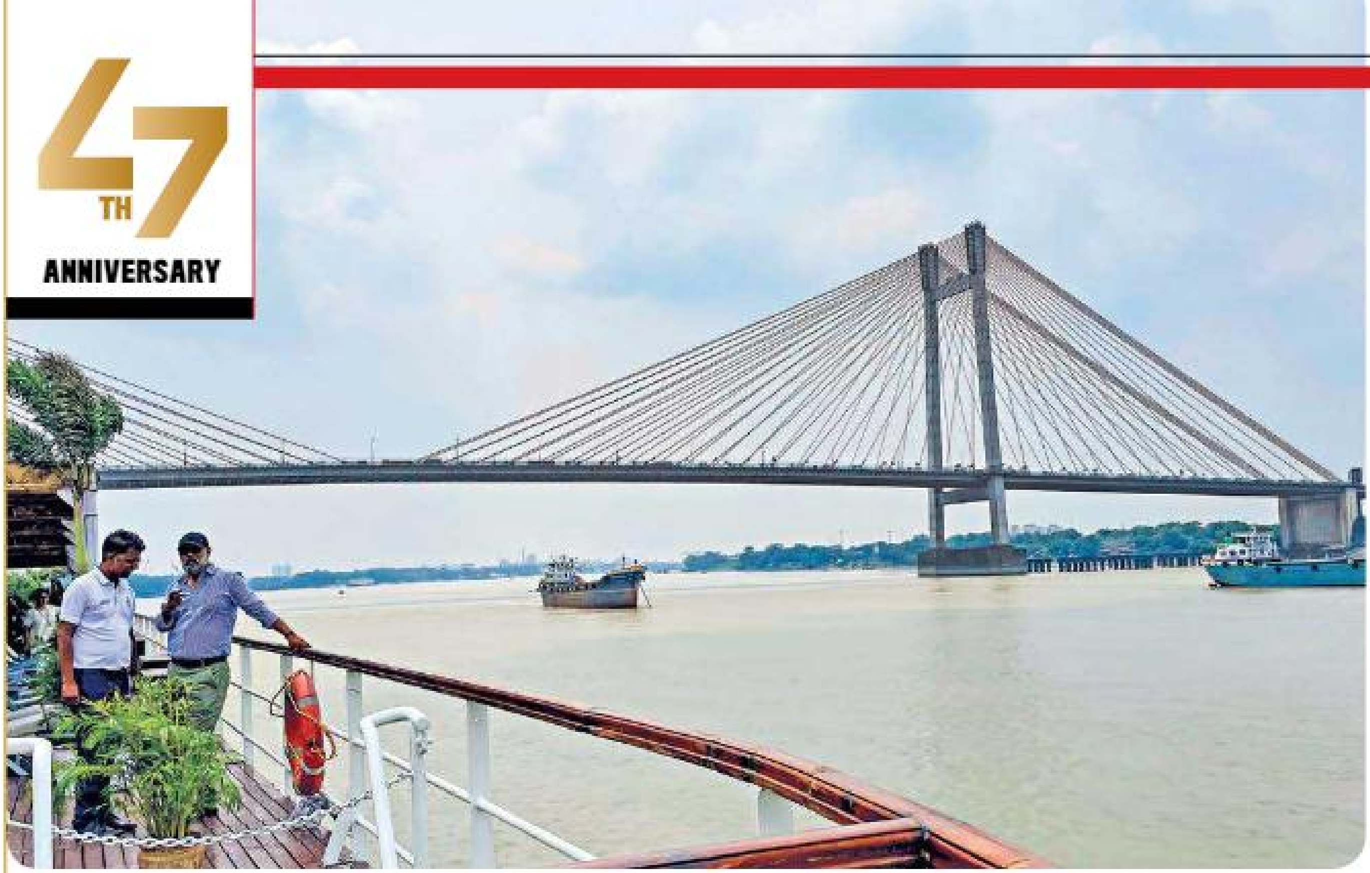
Also known as Ambika Kalna, this Purba Bardhaman town, situated on the banks of the Bhagirathi river, is home to the famous Naba Kailash temple complex (built in 1809), where two concentric rings made up of 74 and 34 terracotta shrines (totalling 108, an auspicious figure in Hinduism), respectively, stand testament to the patronage of the Bardhaman royals, in this case, King Tej Chandra Bahadur.

Our shore excursion kicked off with a toto ride from the riverbank, through the markets, towards two temple complexes just across the street from each other. We first went to the Kalna Rajbari, a sprawling collection of royal temples and shrines built during the early 18th century, following it up with a tour of the terracotta temples of Naba Kailash. The real surprise, however, awaited us at Rajib Debnath's muslin-weaving workshop.

The soft-spoken Jamdani artisan has a few hundred weavers employed in the manufacture of these painstakingly produced and, so, heftily priced textiles that fetch lakhs of rupees in the international market—he supplies to couturiers such as Gucci and Chanel and even has weaves displayed at the Victoria Memorial. At the adjoining store, Debnath produced one that was priced at Rs 19 lakh.

Back in my cabin on the cruise, I deposited myself into the window side cane chair to read, as the unrushed riparian landscape—windswept vetiver planted to prevent erosion, jute drying at regular intervals,

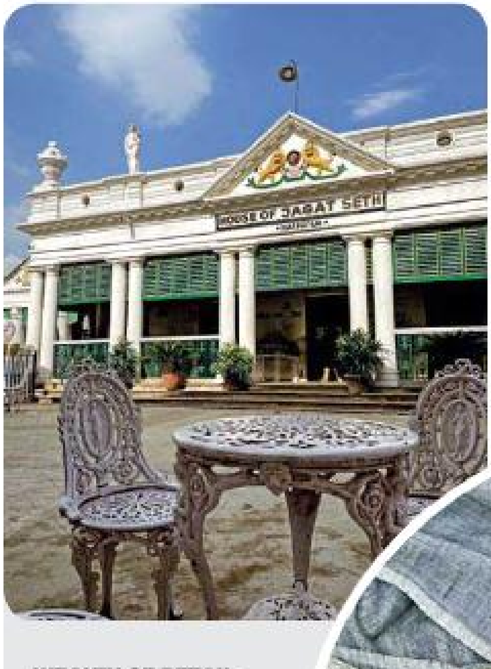
INDRANEEL MAJUMDAR



the incoherent calls of a lone shepherd guiding his water buffaloes across the river—shifted smoothly. I spied a turquoise cupola studded on the horizon. Bearing resemblance with the dome of St Peter's Basilica in the Vatican except for the flags fluttering at the top, it grew bigger as we crept closer to the shore.

This was the Temple of Vedic Planetarium—or the slightly less of a mouthful ISKCON Mayapur, as I decided for myself. Situated close to the Hooghly's confluence with the Jalangi, the temple is a massive complex designed as an earthly interpretation of a celestial township honouring Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, the celebrated 15th century saint whose teachings formed the basis of Gaudiya Vaishnavism in the region.

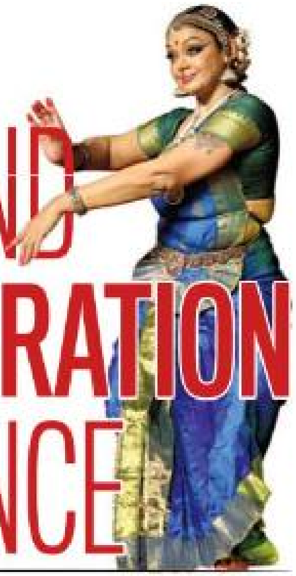
We awoke early for a quick tour of the riverside village of Matiari. Brassworking is to Matiari what silk-weaving is to Murshidabad. From the moment we entered the village, the smell of melting and the endless beating of metal flooded my senses, occasionally punctuated perhaps by the aroma of mustard wafting somewhere in an alley. But the metal was everywhere: in the dusty streets, the sweltering workshops, and the little shops shimmering with freshly produced brassware. Hearing disorders and respiratory issues were merely occupational hazards here, Shubhankar confirmed to me.



WEALTH OF DETAIL
The cruise sundeck (top); the former residence of Murshidabad's Jagat Seth family (above); a Jamdani weave (right)

ONE OF THE MODERN WORLD'S FIRST COSMOPOLISES

The cruise made for Murshidabad after an excursion to Khoshbagh, the peaceful garden-cemetery on the west bank of the river where lie buried Nawab Siraj-ud-Daulah and Lutfunissa Begum, his third



A GRAND CELEBRATION OF DANCE

> *The month-long Indian Dance Festival in Mamallapuram is a homage to India's great classical dance forms in a setting that is as spectacular as it gets.*

There cannot be a more scenic or a prestigious location for a dance festival than the Shore Temple of Mamallapuram 'a UNESCO World Heritage Site' which sits along the Bay of Bengal coastline.

Every year between December-January, the tranquil shore town of Mamallapuram wakes up to the gentle sound of the anklets. The splendid sight of the performance of most accomplished classical dancers across India accompanied with robust melody of drums can be witnessed at the prestigious Indian Dance Festival.

The remarkable little town, known as Mamallapuram, sits an hour's drive south of Chennai on one of India's most scenic routes—the East Coast Road. Once a celebrated port city of the Pallava kings, it is the home to a group of monuments dating back to 7th and 8th centuries, which were carved out of rock along the Coromandel coast. Notable among them are the rathas (temples in the form of chariots), mandapas (cave sanctuaries), giant open-air reliefs such as the famous 'Descent of the Ganges' (locally called 'Arjuna's Penance'), and the stunning Shore Temple.

The Indian Dance Festival—which began in 1992 as the Mamallapuram Dance Festival—attracts visitors from all over the world and is organised under the aegis of the Department of Tourism, Government of Tamil Nadu. It is considered a great honour to perform at the Indian Dance Festival, and the biggest names in the Indian dance fraternity turn up for it. Each dance tell tales from the epics and other ancient lore, as they always have. The repertoire of dance forms includes Kathak, Kathakali, Kuchipudi, Bharatanatyam, Odissi, Mohiniyattam, and many more. Indeed, the entire range of India's refined classical dances come together to offer a feast for the eyes.

Best of all, the festival provides a platform for not just classical dance forms but lesser-known folk dance traditions like Kavadi, Thappattam, Karagam, Oyilattam, and so on. This makes the festival a vibrant event marked by colourful performances.

During the festival, the front lawn of the Shore Temple transforms into a stage. With the magnificent temple serving as the backdrop, the dance performances are nothing short of magic.

A visit to the Indian Dance Festival is a dream come true for both performing artists as well as passionate art enthusiasts. And few dance festivals can claim a venue as mesmerising as this one.

WHERE

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MAMALLAPURAM, CHENNAI

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INDRANEEL MAJUMDAR

OLD MEETS NEW The spacious dining room on the *Rajmahal* (left); visitors at the Hooghly Imambara (above)

wife. About an hour later, the *Rajmahal* sidled up to the wharf on the eastern bank, the stately but slightly tumbledown Wasif Manzil serving as bait to lure curious travellers journeying up the river. Jumping into a seemingly endless supply of tongas and totos along the sunny waterfront, we filed excitedly into town.

The former capital of Bengal, Murshidabad is a heady dose of history, cultural exchange and the arts. The Mughal emperor Akbar founded the city, then called Makhsudabad—and later Aurangzeb had the capital shifted here from Dhaka, under the stewardship of Murshid Quli Khan, the erstwhile nawab. He was buried at the Katra Masjid, a former caravanserai that came up to service the vast hordes of traders that would pass through or arrive here during the 1720s.

Built in 1837 in a combination of Greek and Italian classical styles, the one-thousand-door Hazarduari Palace is a hulking edifice that now functions as a museum exhibiting priceless antiques, weaponry and personal possessions of royalty. It is, however, the three-storey, palm-flanked Kathgola Palace that I had always associated this city with; and once we trundled up to the splendid Georgian-style palace, surrounded by a sprawling mango plantation, I heard about Murshidabad's Jain connection—this palatial timber godown (kath-gola) was constructed by Rai Bahadur Lakshmipat Singh Dugar, a Marwari Jain trader from Rajasthan.

In Nashipur, close to Hazarduari Palace, we visited the 'House of Jagat Seth' museum—the former residence of the family of Murshid Quli Khan's first banker, Seth Manik Chand. In the past 300 years, the community has become an important ingredient of the local salad bowl and come to be known as the Sheherwalis (city dwellers).

The Sheherwalis have played an active role in preserving and promoting Murshidabad's heritage before the world. On the cruise later that night, we met the passionate Darshan Dudhoria who hails from one of the pioneering Sheherwali families in town (most of whom have moved to Kolkata). The eloquent Darshan joined us on the cruise for a meet-and-greet and a preliminary briefing about the Murshidabad experience, and what the Bari Kothi, his ancestral house on the west bank of the river, has brought to the city. In the morning, we again boarded the wooden ferry to get to the Jiaganj-Azimganj side of town, where the Bari Kothi staff braved the drizzle at the riverbank to escort us to the gorgeous hotel premises.

At the lobby, we were given an elaborate welcome, including a welcome scroll that amusingly addressed the men in the group with the title 'babu'. As we stepped into the courtyard for a tour, the heavens finally opened up, heightening the period-romance glow cast all over the late-17th century mansion, which opened up as a heritage hotel in 2018. A captivating melange of architectural aesthetics and elements—corridors shaded by panelled blinds, stunning chandeliers above and patterned tiles below, ornate columns and brightly painted walls—unfolded before the background score of the monsoon.

Moments before I caught a quick nap at my suite before a long drive back to Kolkata, my mind went back to Palashi, and the sly role the Jagat Seths—the financiers of Bengal's nawabs—played in Siraj-ud-Daulah's loss to Robert Clive. Perhaps the answer lay in *Siddhartha*: "It is not for me to judge another man's life. I must judge, I must choose, I must spurn, purely for myself. For myself, alone." ■

Amritsar

THE HOLY SEAT OF SIKHISM

This magical city, which was founded by Guru Ram Das, the fourth Sikh Guru, is home to the holiest site of the Sikh religion—**Harmandir Sahib**, better known as the **Golden Temple**. Amritsar gets its name from Amrit Sarovar, the holy tank the Golden Temple is built around. The building opposite the Golden Temple is the Akal Takht, the highest seat of earthly authority of the Khalsa. Twice a day, the Guru Granth Sahib moves between the Golden Temple and the Akal Takht in a Palki Sahib procession which is a sight to behold. The Guru ka Langar at the Golden Temple, which 75,000 to 100,000 pilgrims partake every day, is among the largest community kitchens in the world and should not be missed.

Amritsar is an atmospheric city filled with old bazaars, gurdwaras, temples and heritage sites and eateries serving delicious local specialties like Amritsari kulche, kaali dal and Amritsari fish. The makeover of the road stretch from Town Hall to Sri Harmandir Sahib, called **Heritage Street**, has dramatically transformed the street which every visitor to Amritsar will invariably take. While Hall Bazaar is a famous historic marketplace, there are also many malls in Amritsar now.

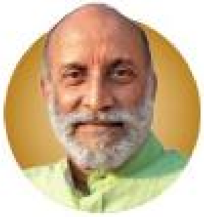
Jallianwala Bagh is a historic garden and 'memorial of national importance' very near to the Golden Temple, preserved in the memory of those wounded and killed in the Jallianwala Bagh Massacre of 13 April, 1919. Housed in the Town Hall building, **Partition Museum** is the first museum to record the trauma that resulted from the Partition of India in 1947. Tourists can use the **Hop-On-Hop-Off** bus service to visit the major sights. Other major attractions include **Gobindgarh Fort, Sri Durgiana Temple, Maharaja Ranjit Singh Museum,** and **Bhagwan Valmiki Tirath Sthal (Ram Tirath)** and the newly built **Jallianwala Bagh Centenary Memorial** during the 100th year commemoration of the Jallianwala Bagh Massacre. An interesting experience is **Sadda Pind**, a 'Punjabi culture living village museum' spread across 12 acres where you can get an authentic taste of Punjab.

The biggest attraction outside Amritsar is undoubtedly the **Attari-Wagah border**. Every evening, the military showmanship at the border between India and Pakistan gets infused with patriotic fervour as a huge crowd gathers to watch the ceremony of closing of the border gates and lowering of flags of both the countries. On the way to Attari lies the **Punjab State War Heroes' Memorial & Museum**. There is no way you can miss the gigantic 45-metre sword jutting out into the sky. **Sarai Amanat Khan**, a monument built in 1640 by Amanat Khan, the calligrapher for the Taj Mahal, lies 17 kms from the Attari Border and 30 kms from the Golden Temple.

The city of Tarn Taran Sahib, 30-min from Amritsar, is home to **Gurdwara Sri Tarn Taran Sahib**, a prominent Sikh shrine.

Sprawling over 4,000 hectares, **Harike Wetlands**, also called **Hari-ke-Pattan**, lies 56 kms from Amritsar. The wetlands are northern India's largest manmade wetlands and a birdwatcher's paradise.

Truly, there is much to do in and around the city of Amritsar.



By AMAN NATH

Chairman, Neemrana Hotels

History Revisited

For Indians, these heritage destinations are not relics, they are places of wonder and comfort

SUMEET INDER SINGH

Lucknow

For me, the skyline of Lucknow represents India, because you see minarets and mosques and temples and churches. It's a mixture of cultures and cuisines as well. Although I don't like decadence personally, it is nice to savour it for a short while. The Qaiser Bagh area in Lucknow is special for me. I have stayed there with my friends Meera and Muzaffar Ali. It's the epitome of *tehzeeb*, all sepia photographs and chandeliers and fine *kilims*; and it's deliciously slow-paced—all the way to the parterres of fragrant Sulaimani roses in Kotwara.

Srinagar

Srinagar was part of my childhood because we used to pass it on our way to Gulmarg, eating at Ahdoos and taking siestas in the shikara while our car was serviced. For the traveller to India, it is Switzerland with a lot of hustle and bustle. In the old parts, it could be a *kasbah* in Morocco. One lasting experience is the lake. Here we have a composite culture, mirrored in a lake. We don't have too many water cultures in India, which is why Srinagar should be celebrated. The wooden architecture is extraordinary. I think the long winters, which produce the most exquisitely embellished crafts, have something to do with it. The geometric Khatambandh work of Turkish inspiration on the houseboat ceilings is wonderful.

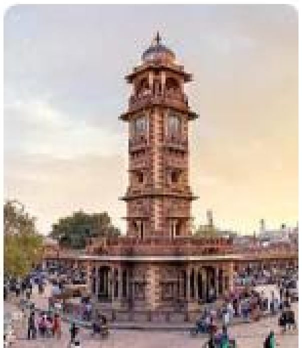
Ajanta and Ellora

Instead of the Taj Mahal, the one symbol of India should be Ajanta and Ellora. It's up there in world heritage—perhaps even Number One. At Ellora, 400,000 tonnes of stone was hand-chipped over 800 years to create these rock-cut temples. People don't market it or tell enough of its story. The quietude of the arrival at Ajanta is amazing. They have now worked on it to create a decent visitor experience with tourist facilities—which is a relief.

Jodhpur

Jodhpur is wonderful because it has a great sense of arrival. If you fly in, you look down and see this absolutely dry landscape in summer, all brown colours and dust. It's like a moonscape; and then you see this tiny waterbody and the Umaid Bhawan Palace in the skyline as you land. It's a place where there are discoveries at every corner. It is India that is modern but also traditional. This is well represented by the erstwhile ruler, Maharaja Gaj Singh, fondly called Bapji, who is old-world and totally contemporary at the same time. The city has also grown in that direction. You can eat modern food here, stay in modern hotels, but you can also do the old-world. That mixture makes it a very Indian sort of civilised experience. Then there's the Mehrangarh Fort. What they've done with it is wonderful. You get a taste of royalty without being made envious of it. The whole experience they have created there is very well done.

SHUTTERSTOCK



Nalanda

Nalanda, for me, was a late discovery. Sadly, nobody seems to go there. What I found totally staggering was how evolved the civilisation that built it was. Nalanda had Asia's biggest library in its heyday. It was burnt down by Bakhtiyar Khilji in 1193 AD. They say it burnt for months and months.

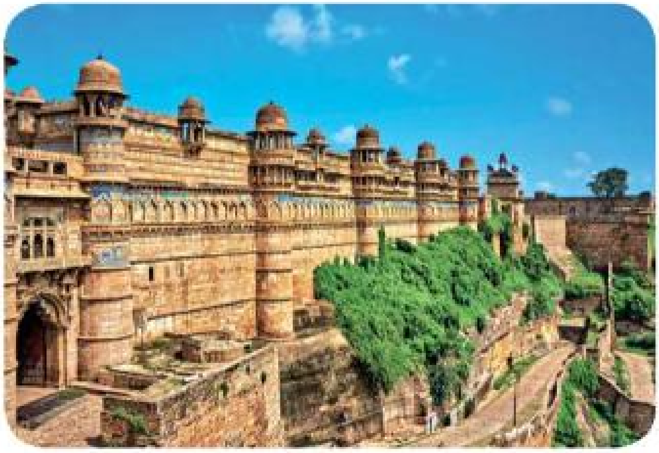
They've only excavated a mound or two; there's so much more to be discovered. Just the proportion of a single brick holds the earth and its ancient tales. Nalanda had a past that is unimaginable and, hopefully, it will have a great future too.

Now that India is in nationalist mode, we are discovering what we were in so many fields. What Mark Twain said about India being "the cradle of the human race, the birthplace of human speech, the mother of history, the grandmother of legend and the great-grandmother of tradition" is truly representative of Nalanda. When Indians go to places like Nalanda they should stop for a minute and say, "Wow, we were all this and let's draw it out of our marrow, so that we continue to aspire to be all that."

Gwalior

Gwalior is a hidden jewel. People aren't even sure if there is anything to see there and if they should go there at all. What I find interesting is that the Taj Express goes to Gwalior, but everybody stops at Agra and comes back. Those who do get to Gwalior realise it's a much better destination than Agra—the latter is very crowded and dirty.

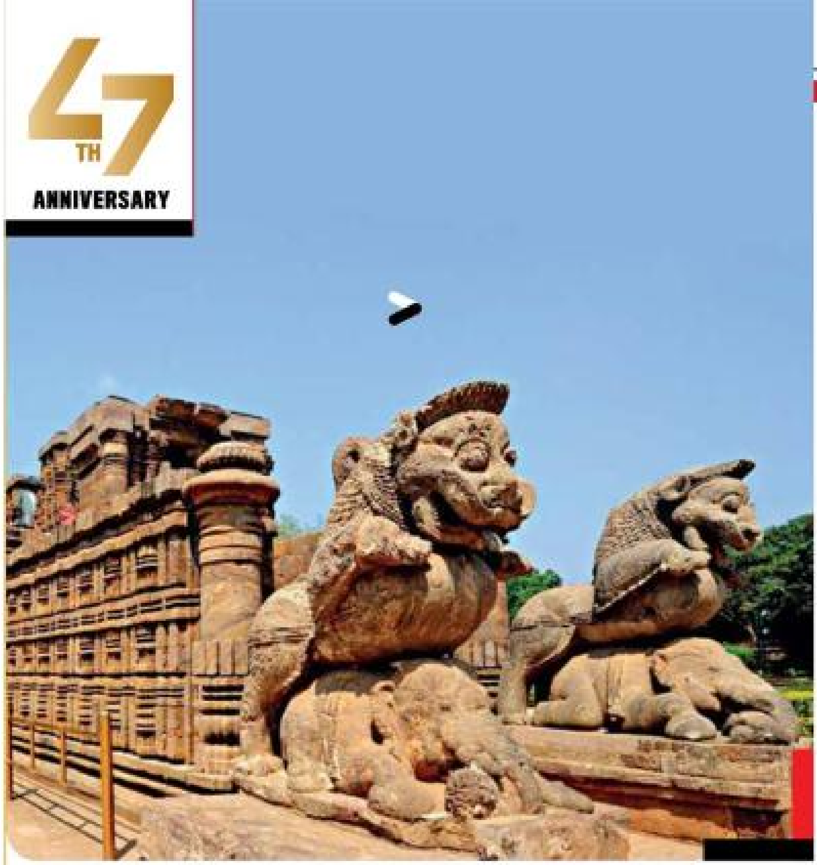
At Gwalior, again, you have a great sense of private discovery. When you go up to the fort and see the Jain caves and statues en route, you begin to appreciate the many layers of civilisation and history there. There are many beautiful temples in Gwalior. The fort of Gwalior is one of the few great Hindu forts that retain its glory. You can get a good idea of the lifestyle of the royals from the size of the rooms, courts and kitchens. Travelling, after all, is also about imagining what lifestyles were in those days, and how we evolved. The sound-and-light show at Gwalior Fort is quite thrilling.



Thanjavur

Thanjavur is the high pinnacle of Hinduism and of Chola architecture. I mean high like 'beyond the heavens'. Just to imagine that you can make a temple with a 700-ft-high shikhara. Then there's the fascinating story of how they made a 6-km-long ramp to roll the kalash up to the top of the Brihadeeswarar Temple. The detailed planning, in terms of how the light enters the temple and falls on the Shiva lingam, is truly humbling. It's not enough to say wow—you have to put your head to the ground and salute the ancestors we had.

Photographs by INDIA PICTURE



Konark

The Sun Temple at Konark is a humbling experience when compared to the arrogance of progress and technology. Just the explanation of what the chariot wheels of the temple signify and how they were conceptualised takes your breath away. The spokes of the chariot wheels break down to hours, minutes, seconds with a bewildering precision. When it had the full shikhara, the temple must have been mighty and grandiose. Even what remains is awe-inspiring. The sound-and-light show at the temple is excellent. And when you go to the beach, it's quiet and cosmic. There's a village en route—Balikondalo—where mud houses painted with beautiful frescoes make it an eternal sort of rural India.

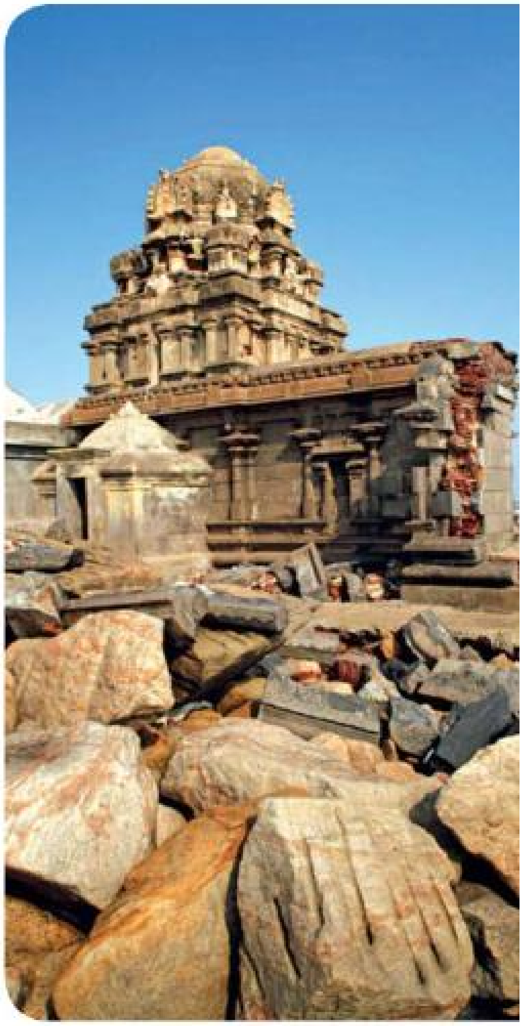
PALLAVI PASRICHA

Khajuraho

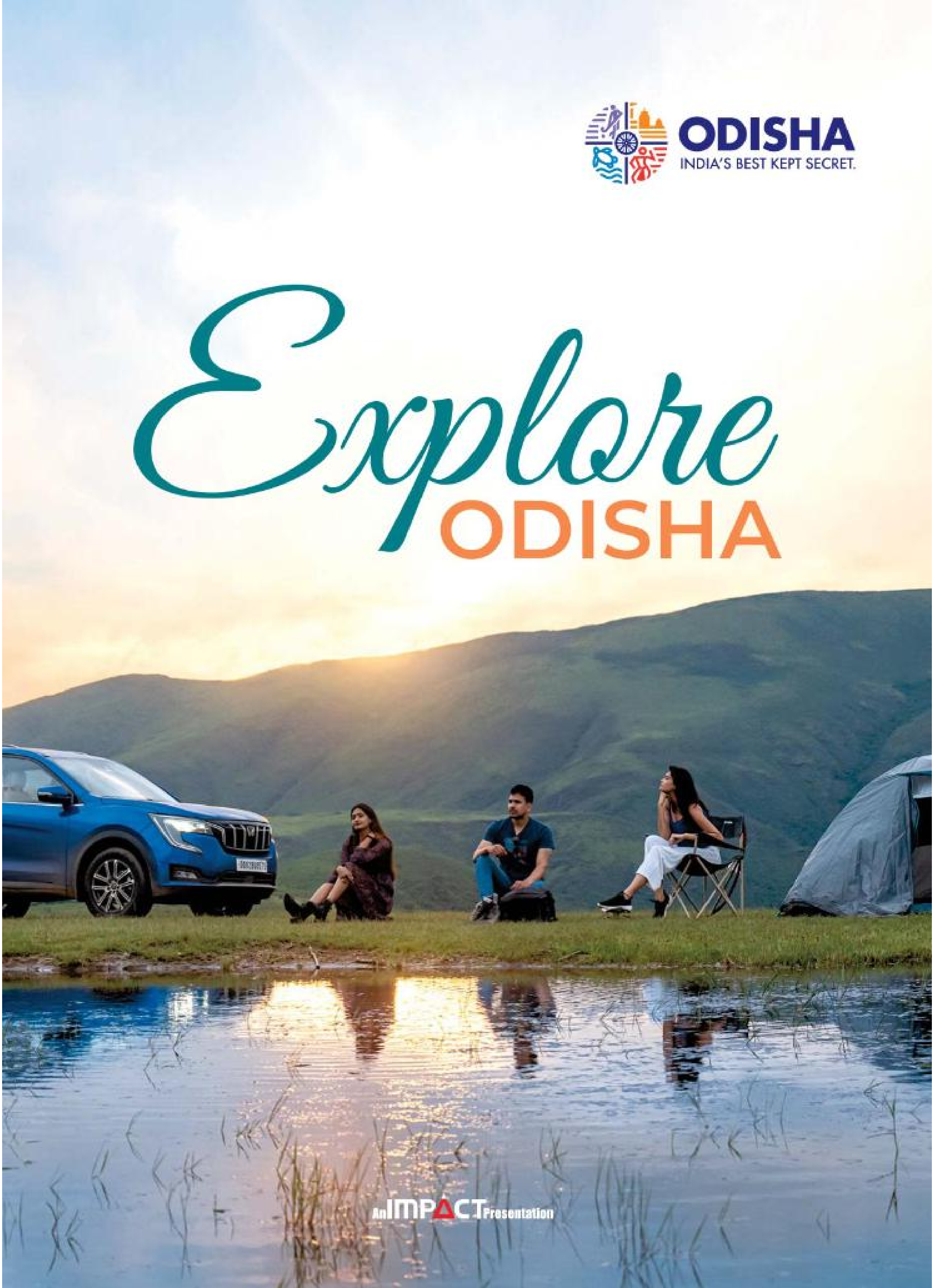
When the West saw Khajuraho they said it is all about procreation and sexuality, but then through Shobita Punja's research and so on, we have got new eyes and come to know how it depicts the wedding of Shiva and Parvati. The details are stunning. For instance, there's a sculpture of a lady picking a thorn from her foot, in stone. The erotic sculptures at Khajuraho have humour in them, the absolute opposite of being coy and Victorian, which historical layering made us.

Tranquebar

In the early days of travel, it was all about travelling to see the difference. In the 21st century, you must also have a sense of unique discovery. That sense is total when the road that takes you to Tranquebar stops at the sea. You reach a dead end. You don't expect anything there. Then you start discovering the destination. Tranquebar has Tamil, Danish and British architecture. There are pretty, white tropical churches. The place is an interesting mixture of East and West. You will find people singing Christian hymns in Tamil. The first printing press of India was set up at Tranquebar and the first publication of the Bible in Tamil was done here. And it has the maxiyozone (maximum concentration of ozone) there to prolong your life.



—with Amit Dixit



ODISHA
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ODISHA

A WONDERLAND OF *Experiences*

The beautiful state of Odisha is marked by contrasting experiences—from culture to adventure, cuisine to craft, heritage to handloom, this destination has it all. With a rich history dating back over 2,000 years, it is one of India's most culturally rich states. Some of the most ancient temples and monuments in India, including a World Heritage Site—the Sun Temple in Konark—are to be found in Odisha.

The Golden Triangle of Odisha Tourism comprises the capital Bhubaneswar (home to the ancient Lingaraj Temple, a masterpiece of Indian architecture) and the seaside towns of Puri and Konark. It's long been a mainstay of tourism in the state, but there's a wonderland of monuments, attractions and experiences beyond this popular circuit. And tourists are beginning to discover these delights.

The entire coastline of Odisha is lined with some of the most beautiful beaches on India's east coast and they offer the same sublime experience as the more popular ones. This is ecologically important territory as well, home to turtle nesting sites and protected wetlands which attract thousands of migratory birds each winter.

Beyond the popular beaches, Odisha has hill stations in the interiors, the unspoilt beauty of nature, and tribal experiences.

Odisha may be better known for its Hindu temples but it was also a major centre of Buddhism at one point and some of India's most important Buddhist sites can be seen here.

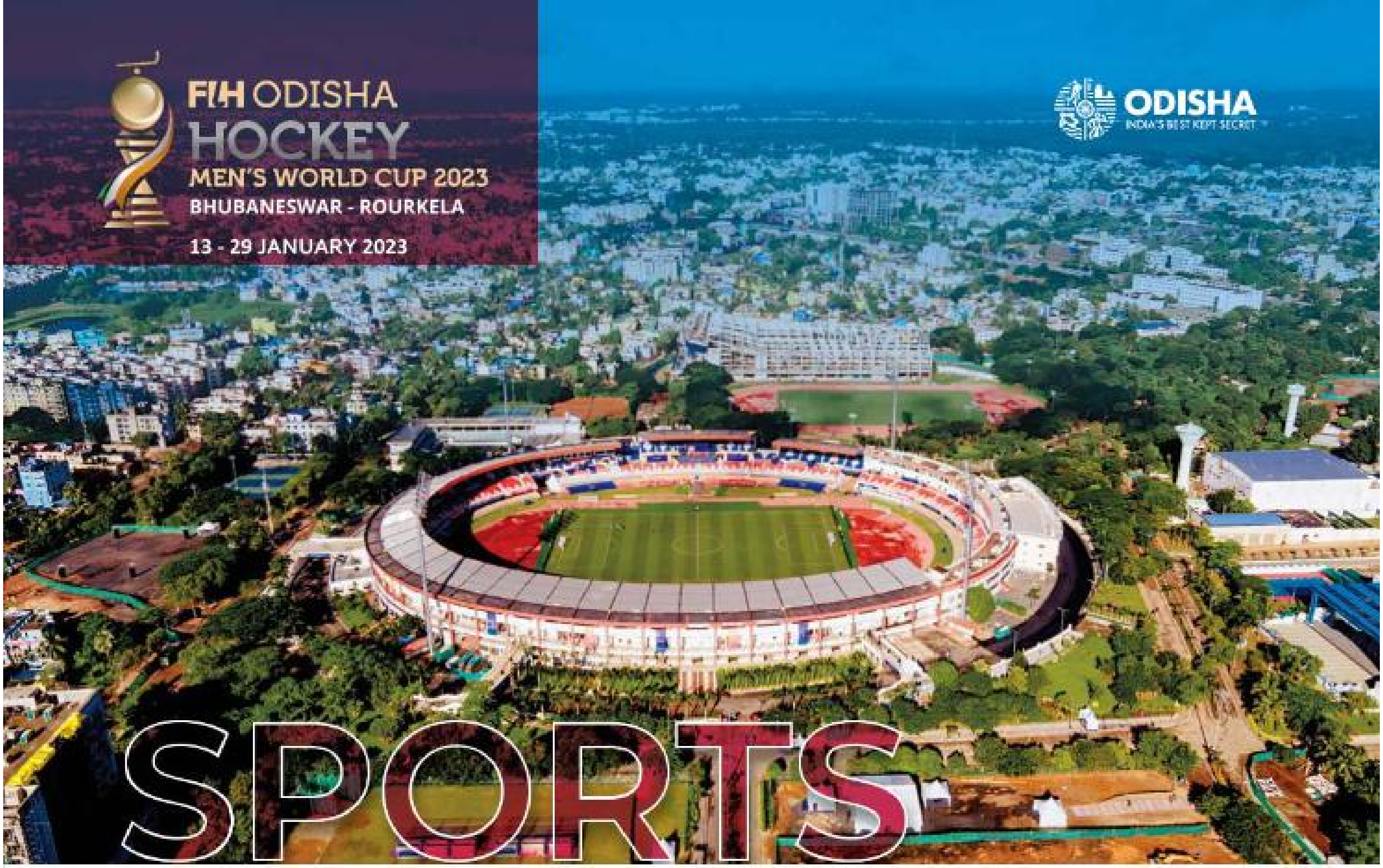
Odisha is a also a road-tripper's paradise. With several circuits identified and excellent roads crisscrossing the state, road trips are a great way to explore the state's hinterland beyond the popular coast and its beaches and heritage attractions.

More recently, Odisha Tourism's uber-popular Eco Retreats have set new benchmarks in luxury glamping and are now offered in no less than 7 scenic destinations. They are a great way for tourists to experience Odisha's diverse tourism offerings—and in style, no less.

The revered Jagannath Temple in Puri plays host to the Rath Yatra, the most important event in the Odia calendar. Beyond the Rath Yatra, there are tourist festivals galore which have been attracting visitors in droves for years.

Odisha truly is a destination like no other, and has something for everyone. So what are you waiting for? Pack your bags and come discover the wonder that is Odisha.

JAI JAGANNATH
2022



SPORTS Capital of India

Odisha has come to be known as the 'Sports Capital of India' in recent years. Sports are a significant part of Odisha's culture, and also play an essential role in the state's overall development. Field hockey is the most popular sport in Odisha. The Government of Odisha has broken new ground by becoming the first state government in the country to sponsor a national hockey team. This association is a first of its kind.

In recent times, Odisha has played host to a number of prestigious sporting competitions, including the Asian Athletics Championships, the FIH Hockey World League, the Asian Rowing Championships, and the FIFA U17 Women's World Cup, amongst others. It should come as no surprise that Odisha is playing host to the FIH Hockey Men's World Cup for the second time in a row given that it is the state that leads the pack when it comes to supporting and promoting sports. The World Cup is taking place from January 13 to 29, 2023 in Bhubaneswar and Rourkela.

Although the game of hockey has a long association with the Olympics, the history of the Hockey World Cup is much more recent, with the first edition being played in 1971. The FIH Odisha Hockey Men's World Cup 2023 will also see the brand-new Birsa Munda International Hockey Stadium in Rourkela split hosting duties with the Kalinga Stadium in Bhubaneswar, which was the sole venue in 2018.

The Kalinga Stadium in Bhubaneswar is already a well-known location for hockey fans. Not only did they successfully host the 2018 Men's World Cup and the 2014 Men's Hero Hockey Champions Trophy, but it is also the home of the Coal India Hockey India League franchise Kalinga Lancers, who won the 2017 League title. Meanwhile, the new Birsa Munda International Hockey Stadium in Rourkela has established itself as the largest hockey stadium in the country due to its capacity to hold approximately 20,000 fans.

Fans will swarm to the Kalinga Stadium to bask in the glory of hockey's most important competition, the Men's World Cup, where winners will be determined and legends will be created. A total of 15 teams will compete in the tournament. Hockey fans have the option of booking your tickets offline at the Stadium or online through Paytm Insider.

Odisha BY ROAD

Discover secrets at every cornor.

Odisha has created various road trip circuits to allow you to explore this relatively unspoilt landscape, full of unexpected surprises at every turn, effortlessly and at your pace. The added bonus is the state's great road network that is well connected with adjacent states too.

THE QUEST FOR ODISHA'S WILD WEST

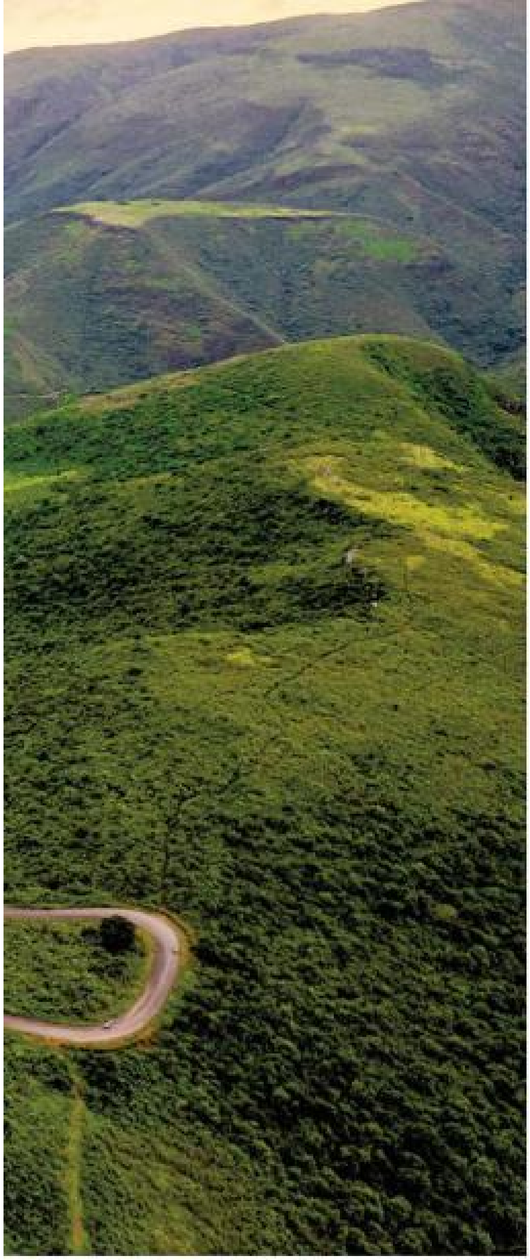
(RAIPUR TO DEBRIGARH VIA HIRAKUD)

The forest safaris at Debrigarh and Satkosia wildlife sanctuaries—which you will get to do on this road trip—are environmentally conscious, while the Hirakud Reservoir is home to some thrilling adventure sports. Do take some time to enjoy the Gandhamardan Hills by hiking through them. Patali Srikhetra, Harishankar-Nrusinghanath, Chausath Yogini, and Indralath are some temples that the spiritually minded may want to visit. This road trip truly offers a wide variety of activities and sights to see.

TIGER TRAILS AND ROYALTY

(RANCHI/JAMSHEDPUR TO SIMILIPAL TIGER RESERVE AND BARIPADA)

On this trip, Odisha's rich history can be experienced alongside natural wonders like



Barehipani, Devkund, and Joranda waterfalls, the fascinating wildlife of Chahala, an exhilarating jungle safari through Simlipal Biosphere Reserve, and the unique flora and fauna of the Mugger Crocodile Rearing Park and Gurguria Orchid Garden. The Krushna Mohan Hanumana cave temple, the Athara Deula temple complex, and the Kichakeswari Temple in Khiching are all essential stops along the way.

DEEP INTO THE MANGROVES

(KOLKATA TO BHITARKANIKA VIA BICHITRAPUR AND CHANDIPUR)

Mangrove walks, boat excursions, cruises, and bike rides are part of this road trip's immersive nature experience, showcasing the picturesque side of Odisha in all its raw grandeur. Experience wildlife in the verdant surroundings of Bhitarkanika National Park, explore spiritual places like the Chandaneswar Temple and Balasore's Emami Jagannath Temple, and relax on the beautiful Chandipur Beach. This vacation is perfect for ecotourists because of the opportunity to engage in some scenic camping.

ULTIMATE MONSOON ESCAPE

(VISAKHAPATNAM TO KORAPUT VIA DEOMALI HILL)

The monsoon season is ideal for this route because that is when Odisha's natural splendour is at its peak. The Gulmi and Duduma waterfalls, as well as the Deomali Hills, are among the highlights of this magical route. Gupteswar Cave is a sacred sanctuary for Hindus, housing a huge Shiva Linga that is believed to be growing larger with time. Visiting the tribal settlements of Dhuruba and Gadaba and engaging in culturally rich conversation with the locals is always a pleasant experience. To learn more about the textile history of Odisha, consider paying a visit to the Tribal Museum in Koraput or the nearby town of Kotapad. The Hindustan Aeronautics Ltd factory in Sunabeda manufactures MIG fighter planes and Sukhoi aircraft, and there's a museum here you can pop into. The Bonda Market in Onukudelli, which takes place every Thursday, is great for souvenir hunting.

CRUISING ALONG THE CIRCARS

(VISAKHAPATNAM TO CHILIKA VIA GOPALPUR)

Take in the stunning natural scenery of Odisha as well as the region's rich cultural heritage on this spectacular drive. The Gandahati waterfall, the healing Taptapani hot springs, the Jirang Monastery, the Taratarini Temple, and so much more are just some of the highlights along the route. Mangalajodi is a fantastic place to go bird watching. It is possible to see the critically endangered Irrawaddy dolphins during a boat excursion from Satapada to Rajhans Island. Chilika Lake is as mesmerising as ever. Those who like to explore the outdoors on foot can visit the temples of Kunti, Bhima, and Jagannath.

THE CASCADE TRAIL

(RANCHI TO KEONJHAR)

This road trip is squarely focussed on the stunning natural splendour of Odisha, from the gushing waterfalls of Bhimkund (said to be where the Pandavas stayed on their many excursions) to the twin waterfalls of Sanaghagara and Badakuda, on to the incredible Sitabinji Fresco Painting and Rock Inscription, and finally to the picturesque Kanjipani Ghati.

REACHING FOR THE HILLS

(VISAKHAPATNAM TO DARINGBADI VIA RAYAGADA)

This route was planned with the thrill-seeker in mind. Before heading off through the lush hills, valleys, and forests of Chatikona, be sure to cross the Hanging Bridge at Chekaguda over the Nagavali River. The drive's ultimate reward is the scenic hill town of Daringbadi, where you may relax among coffee plantations, enjoy the Daringbadi waterfalls, and explore the Butterfly and Hill View parks. Mandasaru is an exciting place to visit because of the abundance of unique medicinal plant and animal species there. Gopalpur-on-Sea Beach, is the perfect place to round up your trip.

To know more about the Odisha by Road itineraries on offer, visit **www.odishatourism.gov.in/content/tourism/en/plan/trip-organizer/find-a- roadtrip.html**

Heritage & Culture

Having been ruled by multiple dynasties with varied religious influences, Odisha's culture is a vibrant one that celebrates diversity. The state's built heritage too reflects this, with both Hindu and Buddhist monuments dotting the state.

THE SUN TEMPLE, KONARK

The Sun Temple was built by King Narasimhadeva I in the 12th century AD, and it is now a UNESCO World Heritage Site. The temple, an offering to the Sun God, takes the form of a chariot with 24 wheels and is drawn by seven horses. The Sun Temple is one of the tallest in India, standing at a height of about 227 feet. The massive building features exquisite carvings and three statues of Surya, each receiving the rays of the sun at different times of day. The Sound and Light Show held every evening at the Sun Temple, which uses the latest laser effects, is a sight to behold.

JAGANNATH TEMPLE, PURI

The temple of Lord Jagannath in Puri, which dates back to the 12th century AD, is one of the Char Dhams (or four holiest places of worship). It attracts the devout from all over the world every day of the year. Two massive concentric walls surround the temple. The massive, 214-foot temple itself stands on a raised platform and is an architectural marvel. Interestingly, all three holy idols of the temple are made of wood rather than stone or metal.

DHAULI

Odisha's Buddhist heritage is no less venerable and the state is home to more than 200 sites. Set on the banks of Daya River, Dhauli or Dhauligiri has a rock edict of Emperor Ashoka. Believed to be the battlefield of the Kalinga war that led to significant changes in Ashoka's beliefs, Dhauli went on to become a major Buddhist centre. One can see a number of stupas, chaityas and pillars at the site. Commemorating the end of the Kalinga war, the Shanti Stupa or 'Peace Pagoda' here has become a place of devotion for many pilgrims. One of the major highlights is Dhauli Kalinga Mahotsav—a three-day annual festival, featuring music, dance and martial art performances.

UDAYAGIRI AND KHANDAGIRI CAVES

Located 7km from Bhubaneswar, these ancient

rock-cut caves were built somewhere around the 2nd century BC by King Kharavela. Set in the Kumari mountain range, the caves were built for Jain monks as a place to stay and meditate. Out of the 117 original caves only 33 survive today; 18 caves are located in the Udayagiri hill and 15 in the Khandagiri hill. The Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) is in charge of the Udayagiri caves and it's a ticketed monument. Many of the caves are double storeyed. It is believed that the upper chambers were used for deep meditation. The most extraordinary achievement of these beautifully carved caves is that each cave and sculpture was painstakingly carved by hand using the most basic tools.

RAGHURAJPUR HERITAGE CRAFTS VILLAGE

Raghurajpur is a heritage craft village 10 kilometres from Puri where each home is a veritable museum showcasing the work of the local artists. Pattachitra, one of Odisha's oldest art forms, is widely practised by the chitrakars in this village. Pattachitra focuses on depictions of Lord Jagannath. The term "patta chitra" comes from the Sanskrit for "canvas" and "cloth". The art form consists essentially of colourful paintings of mythological scenes on cloth. These days, you can find pattachitra artworks on tussar silks, palm leaves, coconuts, and betel nuts; they're also often turned into wall hangings and showpieces that visitors can take home as mementos.

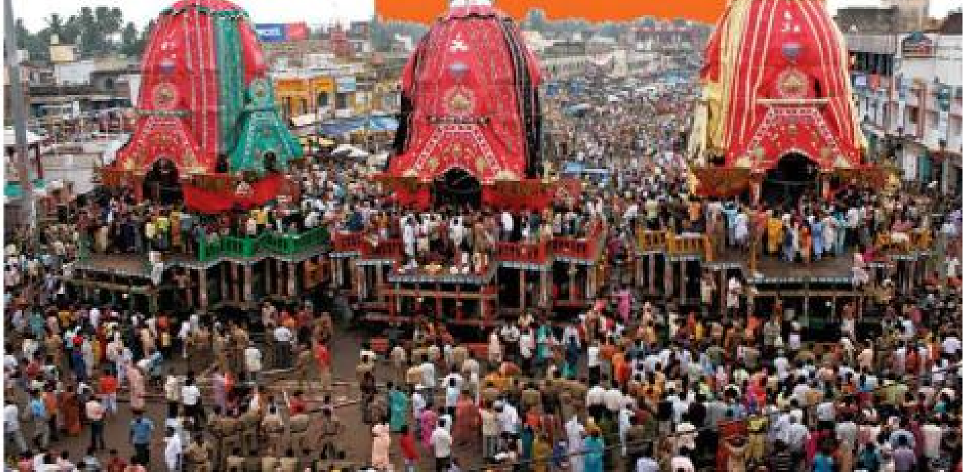
HANDLOOMS

The handlooms of Odisha make for heirloom-worthy wardrobe pieces. The most famous of the state's handloom techniques is ikat—a resist dyeing process in which bundles of yarn are tightly bound together and dipped into coloured dyes before being woven into cloth. Ikat features three distinctive weaving techniques—warp, weft, and double ikat—with typical designs comprising rows of birds, animals, and fish as well as motifs of temple spires. Sambalpuri ikat is considered some of the finest and is mostly produced by the Bhuliya community, who have been practicing the craft for centuries.

RATH YATRA

The Rath Yatra, which usually takes place between June and July annually, is the Jagannath Temple's most important festival, and sees thousands of devotees vie with each other for an opportunity to pull the chariot. The festival marks Lord Jagannath's annual visit to Gundicha Temple via Mausi Maa Temple near Saradha Bali, Puri. The presiding deities of the Jagannath Temple—Lord Jagannath, Lord Balabhadra and Goddess Subhadra—are removed from the temple in a ceremonial procession to their chariots. The huge, colourfully decorated chariots are then drawn by multitude of devotees on the bada danda, the grand avenue to the Gundicha Temple.

On their way back from the Gundicha Temple, the deities stop for a while near the Mausi Maa Temple (Aunt's abode) and have an offering of the Poda Pitha, a special type of pancake which is believed to be the Lord's favourite. After seven days, the deities return home.



CUISINE

Odisha has one of the great heritage cuisines of India, characterised by complex flavours and deft use of seasonal and locally available produce and ingredients. The temple food of Odisha is the stuff of legend, especially the Mahaprasad of the Jagannath Temple in Puri which is made in earthen pots.

THESE ARE SOME OF ODISHA'S MOST ICONIC DISHES

DALMA

This is essentially dal (lentil) cooked with an assortment of vegetables and spices. Apart from being a part of the main course, people relish the dish in a variety of combinations like Dalma with Pitha (local pancake), Dalma with Vada (fried lentil cake), etc. The high protein and healthy dish is the most essential component of any Odia meal. Habisa Dalma is a variant that is made during the holy month of Kartika.

PAKHALA

Pakhala is a great way to reuse leftover rice and is an extremely nutritious preparation. Essentially rice that has been fermented overnight with water, pakhala is served with fried fish or a selection of dry vegetables such as potato and brinjal and an array of condiments which some consider to be the highlight of the meal. Primarily consumed in the summer months for its cooling, replenishing properties, pakhala is favoured by farmers who toil long hours in the fields. Every year on March 20, the Odias celebrate Pakhala Dibas and ensure that this iconic dish remains as popular as ever.

MACHA BESARA

There is always fish on the table in an Odia home. Macha besara is a traditional fish curry from Odisha and features rohu fish cooked in mustard sauce with dry mango slices added for a tangy twist. When paired with hot rice, this is a filling and healthy meal that's simple to prepare but packed with flavour, like most Odia dishes.

CHHENA PODA

Legend has it that Odisha's most famous dessert came about as a result of a baker's happy accident: he or she added sugar to some leftover cottage cheese and baked it in a still-warm oven overnight. Cottage cheese and sugar are combined to make the traditional Odia sweet of chhena poda. The dish is baked in an earthen oven lined with sal leaves, which imparts a delicious smoky flavour to it.

RASAGOLA

Rasagola, also known as kheer mohana in Odisha, is a dish traditionally used as bhog in Puri's Jagannath Temple to appease the goddess Lakshmi. This well-liked dessert is based on curdled milk, which is then drained of its whey before being kneaded into round balls and cooked in sugar syrup to make them fluffy, light, and juicy. In 2019, the Odisha Rasagola received the prestigious GI tag.

Festivals

Odisha is a land of festivals. While the Rath Yatra of Puri is justly renowned all over the world and is an intricate part of the cultural fabric of Odisha, there are several tourist festivals which are also big draws.

NATIONAL CHILIKA BIRD FESTIVAL

Timed to coincide with the arrival of lakhs of winged visitors of around 200 species at Mangalajodi during the balmy Odisha winters, the National Chilika Bird Festival is a birder's dream come true. Photographers can have a field day here, since the birds are seen at eye level and at close proximity. Mangalajodi, situated in the north-eastern part of Chilika, the largest brackish water lake of Asia, is the 'Birds Paradise of Asia' and a shining beacon in the conservation story of India. It shows how conservation can generate livelihood and deal with the menace of poaching.

A major highlight of the festival is a visit to the Nalabana Bird Sanctuary, a beautiful island in the heart of Lake Chilika. The National Chilika Bird Festival is the only time when Nalabana is opened for nature lovers to witness this beautiful bird haven. Activities at the Bird Festival include birdwatching, sanctuary visit, nature walks, boating, technical sessions and photography.

KONARK FESTIVAL

One of India's biggest tourism festivals, The 33-year-old Konark Festival celebrates dance, music and art in a venue where every stone has a story to tell. The enthralling Konark Festival is held every year from 1-5 December, at the Open-Air Auditorium, Konark, with the backdrop of the mammoth Sun Temple, and provides a platform for classical dancers in India and abroad as well as to showcase their talents. It also a great platform for budding artists.

Conceived as a festival to celebrate the nine Classical Dances of India—including Odissi, which originated in the temples of Odisha—the objective of the Konark Festival is to promote Konark, as well as Odisha as a tourist destination. The Konark Festival showcases the best of the traditional and classical dance forms of India, besides offering interesting insights into the rich cultural and dance heritage of the country like no other festival. A wonderful Crafts Mela is held at Urban Haat, Konark at the time of the Konark Festival which adds to the magic of the Festival.

INTERNATIONAL SAND ART FESTIVAL

The International Sand Art Festival, in its 12th edition now, is held on Chandrabhaga Beach at the same time as the Konark Festival, a few kilometres from Konark. The Sand Festival celebrates sand sculptures produced by talented sand artists from across India as well as from many other countries like Mexico, Spain, Singapore, France, Norway, Germany, Netherland & USA. The golden Chandrabhaga Beach becomes a artist's playground during the Festival. Apart from sand sculptures, you can also see stone, bronze and wood sculptures here. Every year, the Festival's theme centres around major global issues.

Eco
Retreat
ODISHA
KONARK

Eco Retreat

ODISHA

India's most exciting glamping event is back and it's even bigger and better this time. From enchanting beaches to picturesque hill stations and amazing wildlife areas—you can choose from 7 exotic locations this season while staying in eco-friendly Swiss tents which are the epitome of luxury. The seasonal camping event in Odisha offers luxury tented accommodations at par with the best luxury resorts apart from hosting a slew of water sports, adventure activities, and trails to key tourist destinations.

The best part is, true to the name, the Retreats are absolutely eco-friendly. Developed as a model for sustainable tourism, this event is for those who believe in responsible travel and tourism without compromising on creature comforts. Apart from being a zero-waste discharge tourism offering, the Eco Retreats in Odisha are conducted in strict compliance with guidelines and standard operating procedures prescribed by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Govt of India. So shed those travel inhibitions and gear up for the ultimate glamorous escapade in the lap of nature.

Glamping packages start at Rs 7,000 onwards and include 1 night stay for 2, inclusive of all meals and 1 adventure activity. Most of the Eco Retreats feature accommodation in Deluxe and Premium Swiss Cottages. The Konark Eco Retreat also offers Royal Luxury Swiss Cottages and the Presidential Suite.

KONARK

Set on the idyllic Ramchandi Beach, just a few kilometres from the Konark Sun Temple , this glam camp promises mesmerising views of the Bay of Bengal. Visitors are treated to cultural performances and guided tours to nearby destinations. For adrenaline seekers, there is parasailing and other water sports, ATV rides, beach volleyball, etc. Visits to the Konark Sun Temple and Balukhand Sanctuary are a must as is the ride to Golden Beach in Puri which was recently re-certified as a Blue Flag Beach.

SATKOSIA

Satkosia lies along the magnificent gorge over the Mahanadi River. This biodiversity hotspot houses the Satkosia Tiger Reserve and the glamping retreat is camouflaged on the banks of the river next to the sanctuary—a perfect destination for anyone who wants to experience luxury in the lap of nature. Do go on a boat ride on the Mahanadi, an make an exciting river safari of it.

HIRAKUD

Built across the mighty Mahanadi River, the main attraction of this Eco Retreat is Asia's longest earthen dam, Hirakud. Behind the dam extends a reservoir spread over 743 sq. km. Nestled between Debrigarh Wildlife Sanctuary and the reservoir, this glamping site offers an

HIRAKUD DAM

opportunity to explore Western Odisha's vibrant culture and delectable traditional cuisine. Expect guided treks into the sanctuary or find your wild side with exciting water sports activities like parasailing, jet skiing, banana boat rides, etc.

BHITARKANIKA

An unexplored virgin beach inside a National Park and some plush amenities thrown in—that's the Eco Retreat at Pentha Beach inside the Bhitarkanika National Park, which is a Ramsar Site and the second-largest mangrove ecosystem of India. Do not miss the opportunity to go a boat safari along the creeks of Bhitarkanika to spot the birds. Go on a trip to the nearby turtle sanctuary at Gahirmatha Beach where the Olive Ridley turtles come to nest every year.

SONAPUR

The southernmost beach in Odisha is located on the confluence of the river Bahuda and the Bay of Bengal, and is one of the most exquisite beaches on the east coast. Lounge on the beach, enjoy some water sports activities or gorge on delicious sea food. Nearby attractions include the port town Berhampur, with its rich maritime history, Potagarh Fort, Tampara Lake, and the famous Gopalpur-on-Sea and Lighthouse.

PUTSIL

Putsil in Koraput welcomes all those who love to live among the clouds. Known as one of the most scenic spots in Odisha, this table-top mountain destination lies at the base of Deomali hill range of the Eastern Ghats. Here you will wake up to the gorgeous view of clouds gliding through the hills and valleys. Scenic attractions include Duduma, Rani Duduma Waterfalls and lush green valleys; and there are interactions with indigenous tribal communities.

DARINGBADI

Daringbadi hill station is surrounded by beautiful valleys and plateaus dotted with pine forests, and coffee and pepper plantations, making this campsite incredibly scenic. Perfect for those looking to luxuriate in tranquil environs, the itinerary includes visits to Daringbadi waterfall and Daringbadi coffee garden. You can also visit picture-perfect destinations like Belghar, Ushabati valley, Putudi waterfall and Mandasaru.

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HOCKEY INDIA

By **YOGENDRA PRATAP**
Editor, Auto Today

Many a Paradise Found

Once you take the wheel, India can seem endless. Here are 10 journeys worth steering for

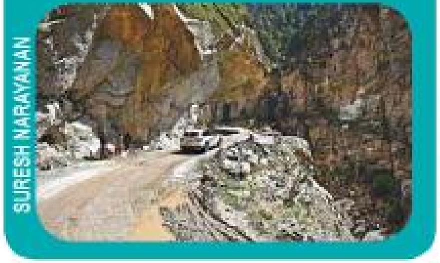
I have spent the best part of my life driving. My work makes me drive and my holidays are spent driving, too. So, while it is a bit of a challenge to pick 10 of the best drives, these have made the list for the beauty, splendour, history, excitement and challenges they afford.

Manali-Leh-Srinagar

This journey, along with the various offshoots in Ladakh—east to Hanle/ Umlingla or north to Nubra—has to be on the bucket list of all those who love to drive. High altitude passes present some challenges, but this is picture postcard territory wherever you look. The Zojila (now on the new alignment), for instance, presents a contrasting beauty—the evergreen Kashmir Valley on the one hand, and the high-altitude desert of Ladakh on the other.

Shimla-Reckong Peo-Kaza-Manali circuit

There are many good driving roads in Himachal Pradesh, but it is the Lahaul and Spiti Valley circuit that gives you a perfect mix of difficult terrain, attractions and scenic spots. Whether it is the oldest mummy at Gue, the drive along the Sutlej, the stark landscape around Kaza or the slight diversion to the Baspa valley and Chitkul on the old Tibet trade route, you're sure to want to return.



SURESH NARAYANAN

Bikaner-Jaisalmer

Rajasthan is steeped in history with every small town and area having its own story to tell. For driving enthusiasts, they are all connected by a great network of roads. Start from the Shekhawati region, visit the palaces at Bikaner and stop by at the numerous solar farms around Pokhran, and dash to Jaisalmer. Beyond are the dunes at Sam and the war memorial at Longewala.

The Mughal Road

There is no doubt that Kashmir is one of the most scenic regions in India and the world, but with all the heavy traffic, getting out of Srinagar by road through the Banihal pass is quite painful. The Mughal Road, on the other hand, leads you on a path of history, away from the crowds and through some stupendous sights—the man-made 'Peer ki Gali' or the beautiful meadows in the apple town of Shopian. The best part is that despite the construction of a metalled road for light vehicular traffic, the Mughal Road is still not part of the popular tourist circuits.

SURESH NARAYANAN

Ahmedabad-Bhuj-Vighakot Fort

SURESH NARAYANAN

Dasada, a town that sits on the edge of the Little Rann, is a hub of adventure. There are flamingos, deer and black buck to see at the Wild Ass sanctuary. From Wankaner to Gondal and Junagadh, there are palaces and car collections to delight in, but then we would be digressing from our route that is headed to the white Rann beyond Bhuj at Dhordo. This region also boasts some sites associated with the ancient Indus Valley civilisation. The BSF war memorial beyond the India Bridge is where civilians are usually stopped, but if you get permits, then you can make it to Vighakot Fort.

Kochi-Munnar-Thekaddy-Alappuzha

From the tea gardens around Munnar to the spice gardens around Thekaddy, from the backwaters of Alappuzha to Fort Kochi, there are many destinations dotted along this path. You could also visit the Periyar Tiger Reserve and spend time on a houseboat on the backwaters, but this route is not off-the-beaten track at all.

Vishakapatnam-Araku Valley-Jagdalpur

One can either start at Raipur or Hyderabad for this circuit, but I'd pick Chhattisgarh. The state remains one of the last bastions not yet overtaken by development, although the beautiful Araku Valley now has a constant stream of tourists. The coffee stalls around the plantations in the valley offer an overly sweet heady concoction while the numerous roadside eateries offer a specialty—chicken cooked in bamboo in open fires. The entire route, with its side excursions, is pretty and also pristine.

Gangtok-Nathula-Zuluk-Kalimpong

Sikkim is untouched by heavy tourism and I have chosen the route from Nathula, via Nathang to Kalimpong, because of the switchbacks at Zuluk. The only place in India that rivals these is in Ladakh, on the way to Bara-lacha la. Apart from the trade that flourishes between India and China at Nathula, there are spots from where one can get great views of the Kanchenjunga.

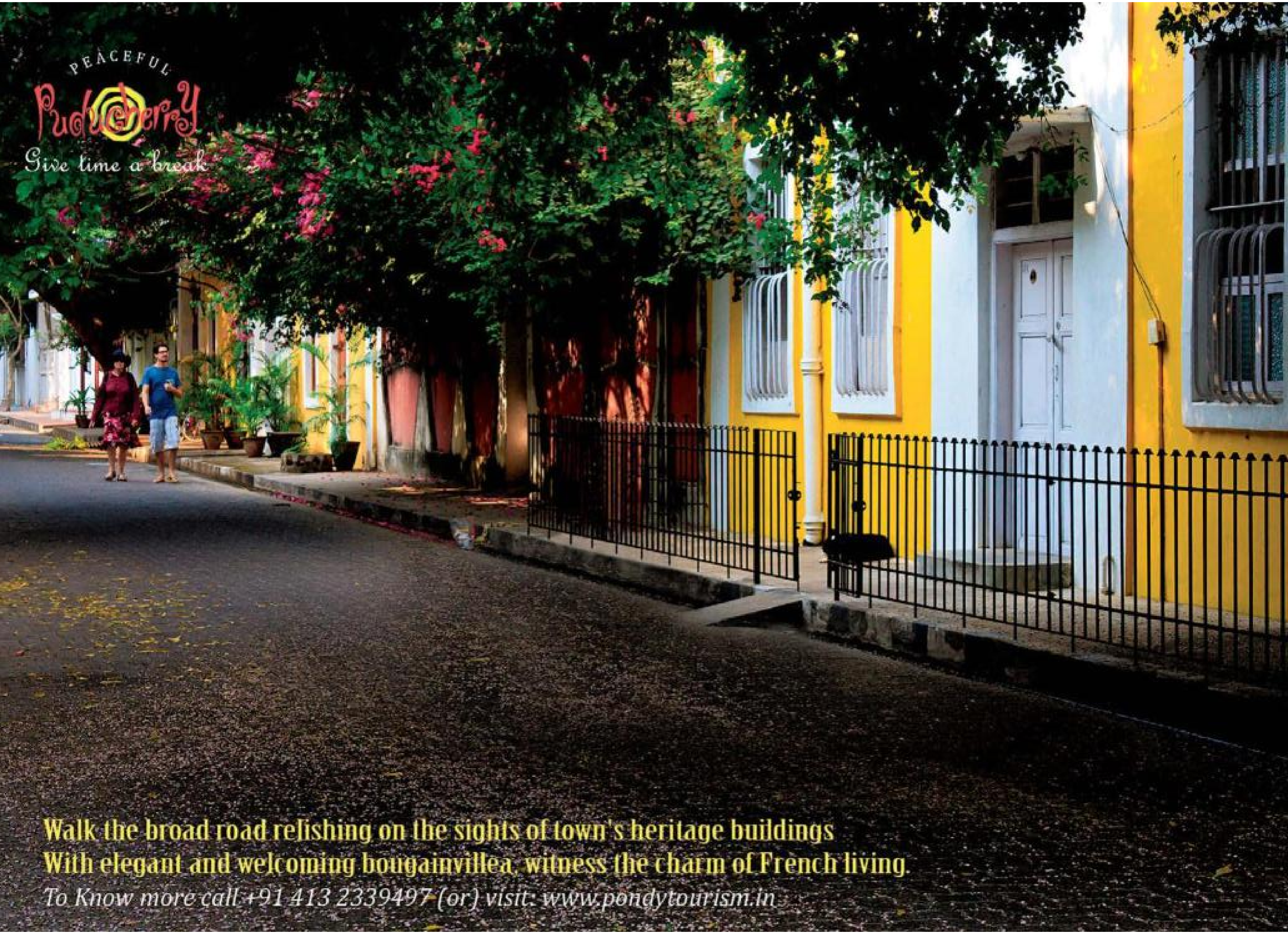
Mumbai-Goa

This is one route that has been on the driver's map for as long as there have been road trips in India, but it can always be done with a twist. If you follow the straight road, then there are numerous beach towns to visit. Alternatively, you can just hug the beach from Alibaug onwards and visit some famous and many unknown beaches nestled between the outcrops of the Western Ghats. The other way to do it is to drive towards Pune and choose one of the countless crossings over the Ghats.

SURESH NARAYANAN

Pasighat-Gelling

The beauty and the challenge of this drive is that one follows the Brahmaputra north to nearly the point where it enters India from China. For the most part, one can drive up the west bank of the river, and on the way back, cross over to the east bank where there are bigger towns like Yingkiong and better roads as well. It may be a better idea to use a 4x4, especially if you are planning to make this trip around the monsoon season.


PEACEFUL
Puducherry
Give time a break
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By **ATUL KOCHHAR**

UK-based Michelin-starred chef; chef partner, SAGA, Gurugram

INDIA PICTURE

Roadside Bites

We often remember places in India by the food we devour in their streets. A quick homage to some of our most beloved street foods

The subcontinent is a land of diverse cultures and traditions, and food unites it brilliantly. Street food is the most tempting part of our culinary offerings. Every place has its own delicacies adored by locals who will tell you that the street food in their town is better than anything else you might try in India. Here's my list of top 10 street foods of India that you must try.

Pani Puri

This delicacy is the most common and famous street food in the country. Served with boiled potato and chickpeas, chutney, chaat masala and soupy water (pani), the mix of ingredients, as well as the name of the dish, varies from state to state. In Delhi, for instance, it's called golgappa.

Chhole Bhature

This is another popular and in-demand street food from North India, especially Punjab, and consists of a combo of chana masala and hot *bhatura* (fried bread made from maida).

SHUTTERSTOCK

Kothu Parotta

This is the classic street food of Tamil Nadu. Egg Kothu Parotta is made with leftover paratha and eggs mixed with some spicy onion tomato masala. You can have it as a snack, breakfast, or dinner.

INDIA PICTURE

Banarasi Tamatar ki Chaat

This is the most famous street food of Varanasi, and combines flavourful tanginess with a tinge of sweetness. At SAGA, Gurugram, we introduced this dish with a little twist, and it was loved by guests. Its preparation includes loads of ghee, tamatar, mashed potatoes, ginger, green chilli, heeng and mango powder.

GETTY IMAGES

Kadhi Kachori

This is a local delicacy from Ajmer. Kachoris are balls of deep-fried dough stuffed with different fillings and eaten as a snack with kadhi made of curd and gram flour.

SHUTTERSTOCK

Bombay Sandwich

Bombay aloo chutney sandwich is the most consumed street food in Mumbai–more than vada pav. It has aloo and green peas masala packed in between bread slices with mint and tamarind chutney. The bread is slathered with butter and sometimes mozzarella cheese.

INDIA PICTURE

Jhalmuri

Jhalmuri is a popular street snack from Bihar. I'm a Punjabi but my entire childhood was among Biharis, and we grew up eating this. It's made of puffed rice and an assortment of spices, vegetables, chanachur and mustard oil.

INDIA PICTURE

Dabeli

Dabeli is a popular snack from Gujarat. It is a made by mixing boiled potatoes with a special dabeli masala, putting the mixture in aladi pav (burger bun), and serving it with chutneys made from tamarind, date, garlic, red chillies and other ingredients. It is garnished with pomegranate and roasted peanuts.

Idiyappam

Idiyappam is an authentic and traditional Kerala noodles recipe made with rice flour in a traditional steam cooker. It is generally served with a coconut-based vegetable stew, locally known as 'istew', but can be served with any chutney or spicy curry.

SHUTTERSTOCK

SHUTTERSTOCK

Lucknow Makhan Malai

This is one of Lucknow's most famous desserts, best described as creamed butter. A winter speciality, its cloud-like consistency makes it disappear in your mouth in no time.

By **SUSMIT SEN**

Guitarist and co-founder, Indian Ocean

Rhythm in Repose

You shouldn't just stream music, you should also travel for it. Here are some of the most exciting music festivals in the country

Kumbhalgarh Festival, Rajasthan

Celebrated in the winter months at the grand stage of the Kumbhalgarh Fort near Udaipur, this cultural festival has grown from strength to strength each year. The grand opening features traditional dances, puppet shows and various contests, while the daytime *haat* (festive market) offers locals a chance to display craft pieces from all over the state. When the sun goes down, the venue transforms into a sensory spectacle with stunning dance and music performances.

International Yoga and Music Festival, Rishikesh

The yoga capital, Rishikesh, is also home to a spectacular fest that celebrates music along with yoga. Held over a period of seven days, the festival features workshops and sessions. The evenings are reserved for a curated dance and music line-up. The next in-person version of the event, organised by the Nada Yoga School, has been eagerly awaited ever since restrictions were lifted after the pandemic and crowd events resumed.

Hampi Utsav, Karnataka

This festival in Karnataka is huge in terms of audience number, and I can recollect performing before a sea of people, stretching from the stage to the Virupaksha Temple about half a kilometre away. The next edition of the festival will be held in the last week of January 2023 over three days, and will feature an array of cultural programmes, including a sound-and-light show, showcasing the glory of the Vijayanagara Empire.

Jodhpur RIFF, Jodhpur

This five-day roots music extravaganza, held at the Mehrangarh fort, RIFF (Rajasthan International Folk Festival), features some of the most visually dazzling music performances among festivals all over India. I performed at the RIFF twice, the first of which was with Rolling Stones frontman Mick Jagger in the audience (Jagger is the chief international patron of the festival). An impressive number of Rajasthani folk artists who have performed here have gone on to garner international acclaim, from Kutle Khan to Bhanwari Devi.

Kasauli Rhythm and Blues Festival, Kasauli

The latest edition of the KRBF, Kasauli's beloved assemblage of lovers of music and the hills, featured the duo Hari & Sukhmani and the iconic Parikrama. Usually held over two days, the festival will turn a decade old this year, and has featured iconic artists such as Usha Uthup, Rabbi Shergill, and Kutle Khan, to name a few. One more reason to head to KRBF?

NH7 Weekender, Various cities

The NH7 Weekender is touted as one of South Asia's largest music festivals. Ever since debuting in 2010, the much-loved fest has been held across the country. The 13th edition of the festival had Shillong as the partner city, and featured a line-up boasting acts including The Lumineers, Mame Khan, Kr$na, HanuMankind, J.I.D, not to forget the Berklee Indian Ensemble.

Escape Festival of Arts & Music

When it started, Escape was known as the music festival with a venue to kill for. The lakeside environs of Naukuchiatal offered a superb setting to witness some stirring performances, with headliners including iconic rock acts like Delhi band Them Clones and Mumbai's ToT to Skinny Alley from Kolkata, a regular feature at the event, and the representatives of 'Bangalore rock', Thermal and a Quarter. In 2015, the festival moved to Ladakh.

#MAHINDRABLUES

Mahindra Blues, Mumbai

The 70-year-old Mehboob Studios in Bandra forms the backdrop for one of India's most popular blues festivals. Assembling iconic names in the genre from all over the world every year, Mahindra Blues has in the past featured the Tedeschi Trucks Band and Shillong's Soulmate. Buddy Guy himself headlined the 2020 edition. MBF 2023 is scheduled for February 11-12.

Hornbill Festival, Nagaland

Held in the heritage village of Kisama, Hornbill has seen appearances by both renowned and emerging indie bands and artists. In 2019, the Hornbill International Rock Contest—a popular competition—was discontinued. In its place, the Hornbill Music Festival, a separate experiential offering, has been launched, and is organised across Kohima and Dimapur.

SHUTTERSTOCK

SHUTTERSTOCK

Ziro Festival of Music, Arunachal Pradesh

Much before Arunachal Pradesh stamped its offbeat appeal on the tourist map, this outdoor music festival, created by Anup Kutty and Bobby Hano, had begun drawing indie music lovers to the Ziro Valley. For the past decade or so, ZFM has hosted an eclectic mix of musicians, including Divine, Indus Creed, Peter Cat Recording Co., Menwhopause, and Lou Majaw.

-with Prannay Pathak

By **JOANNA VAN GRUISEN**

Wildlife photographer and filmmaker

Call of the Wild

Natural habitats often deliver on their promise of surprise and rejuvenation, but here are 10 Indian reserves that never fail to please and excite

It is an oft-repeated axiom that India is a country with immense diversity. This is as true for its natural habitats as it is for its people and culture. Although I have lived here for over 40 years and for many of those decades worked in wildlife areas, there remain many protected areas to which I have never been. When India's Wildlife Act was enacted in 1972, there were only five National Parks and around 36 sanctuaries. Fifty years on, in 2022, there are over 950 areas specifically protected as areas of conservation concern. These are all important habitats, so for me, the "best" are the ones I have most enjoyed or with which I am most familiar.

Hemis National Park

The park in the **trans-Himalaya of Ladakh** is another incredible area in which I have been fortunate enough to reside. Camping in temperatures of -20°C, at over 4,000 m took away none of the pleasure of being in such stunning landscape. The wild sheep and goats, the lammergeiers and golden eagles, the marmots and mouse hares and, of course, the several carnivores all fascinated. It is a high-altitude desert area which may appear austere and unoccupied, but is, in fact, home to the highest variety of mountain prey species—good for the wolves, snow leopards and wild dogs that feed on them.

GETTY IMAGES

Dachigam National Park

My first abode in India, it's still one of my favourite places. The park is in a mountainous region just outside of Srinagar, in **Kashmir**, and is the only home of India's highly endangered member of the central Asian red deer family, the *hangul* or Kashmir stag. It is also an amazing place to see the Himalayan black bear, especially in autumn when they are feeding up on nuts and acorns before their winter hibernation. The landscape is beautiful and changes with each season: winter, spring, summer and autumn—white, pink, green and burnt orange.

Changthang Sanctuary

Further to the east in ***Ladakh*** *is the Changthang Sanctuary, covering much of the western limit of the Tibetan plateau in India. Here lie wonderful wetlands, self-drainage lakes that provide peaceful nesting areas for migrant birds like the stately black-necked cranes. On the surrounding grasslands and slopes, you can see the magnificent kiang, the impressive argali sheep and the unusual Tibetan fox. The high point of my latest visit there was the culmination of a 40-year yearning—the sighting of Pallas's cat.*

Desert National Park

Temperature-wise, at the other end of the spectrum is the Desert National Park in **Rajasthan**. Another unique ecosystem, whose creatures have adapted to the dry and hot conditions. My favourites are the spiny-tailed lizards, the long-eared hedgehog and the now highly endangered Great Indian Bustard.

Photographs by INDIA PICTURE

Keoladeo National Park

Moving from dry to wet, a wonderful park to visit is **Keoladeo or Bharatpur**, also in Rajasthan. Walking or cycling around this bird sanctuary is a fabulous experience. My most special visit was when I timed it to coincide with a solar eclipse: all the storks and herons returned to their nests as though it were nightfall.

Sanjay National Park

A central Indian park with a wonderful river system is Sanjay National Park, which now straddles the **border areas of both Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh**. It has beautiful sal forest scenery and if you go in the mahua season, it will also seem extraordinary for the number of sloth bear to be seen.

Eravikulam National Park

I am not as familiar with the nature reserves of South India, but being a mountain-lover, **Eravikulam and bordering Grass Hills** in the Western Ghats stand out as special for me. I love those high grasslands and nestling shola forests. Seeing elephants in such a surprising setting and meeting Nilgiri tahr and lion-tailed macaques are unforgettable experiences. The 12-yearly bloom of the Neelakuranji (*Strobilanthes kunthiana*) is a mind-blowing adventure; those fantastic green hills turn a most fabulous purple—spectacular.

Manas National Park

The park will always be high on my favourite area list. This is a unique ecosystem in **northeast India, bordering Bhutan**, and is home to the highest number of endangered species of any protected area in India. It also has a fantastic diversity of birds, due to the varied habitats from grassland plain areas and mountain forests to a delightful riverine system. Rare creatures such as the golden langur, pygmy hog, hispid hare and Assam roofed turtle can be found here.

Coastal Reserves of Odisha

India also has fantastic mangrove and beach areas and some of the loveliest are in Odisha—Gahirmatha Marine Sanctuary and Rushikulya rookery coast. I once had the unforgettable experience of witnessing a mass hatching of olive ridley turtles. The tiny, strong-flippered little creatures emerge from the sand at night to make their way to the water, attracted by the moonlight-lit waves breaking at the sea edge.

Panna National Park

The Panna National Park in ***central India*** *is also an area with a variety of micro ecosystems supporting a great variety of avian fauna. I love the landscape, the pristine river Ken, the golden grasslands and the rocky escarpments between plateaus. These cliffs provide perfect nesting habitat for some of the resident vultures and the springs at their base provide water for the park's denizens through the long dry season. A visit to this park rarely fails to provide some exciting natural history moment.*

By **AMIT PASRICHA**

Panoramic photographer; Founder, India Lost and Found project

Master your Lenses

A top photographer trains his eye on the country's most photogenic beauty spots

INDIA PICTURE

Garli

It's a small village in Himachal Pradesh where the Beas River meets the plains. This village was set up by the Sood clan; in fact, it's right next to Pragpur, another place one should visit. Garli has these old homes with slate shingles, *jaali* brickwork and remnants of Belgian glass chandeliers. Each home is built in its own individualistic style; some of them are like a chateau, all with beautiful brickwork, worth capturing on camera. Several houses have been locked up and left to decay by the owners. But do walk around and get some nice photographs as Garli is really picturesque.

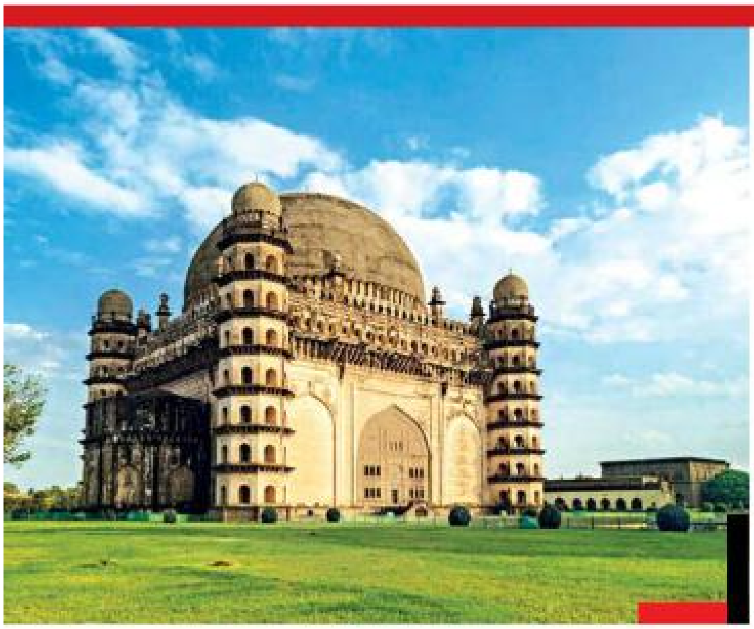
Photograph by BANDEEP SINGH

Kapurthala

What makes Kapurthala in Punjab remarkable is all the French architecture; it had about seven palaces, some of which have been demolished. The Jagatjit Palace is the largest but difficult to access as it's also the Sainik School. Some are quite decrepit and threatened by the possibility of demolition, such as the Lal Kothi and the Jalli Kothi. But the place that will take your breath away is the Moorish Mosque, an immaculate and well-maintained structure. There are some lovely havelis in town, and even the Shalimar Bagh with its memorials is worth exploring with your lens.

Chanderi

This remarkable town in Madhya Pradesh is home to the Chanderi saree. As you wander around town, you encounter homes where entire families are busy weaving these exquisite sarees. Don't miss the opportunity to capture these skilled artisans at the loom. Then there's the Chanderi Fort and below it an amazing gate called the Badal Mahal, which really doesn't lead anywhere, but is beautifully carved.



INDIA PICTURE

Bijapur

Located in North Karnataka, Bijapur is famed for its Gol Gumbaz. Set in a very large complex, it will appeal to your trigger-happy lens and allow you to shoot it from many different angles. Though it appears to be a bit squat on the outside, when you go in, the interior is so imposing that it takes your breath away. Ibrahim Rauza in Bijapur is another photogenic complex. It has this beautiful calligraphic *jaali*, damaged now, but again quite unique in having an identity of its own. With the right light, your lens can capture some superb shots of its detailing.

Gokak

I had gone to Gokak in North Karnataka to shoot a factory owned by Shapoorji Pallonji. Gokak Mills used to drive the economy of the place and lies right on the banks of a river where there is a waterfall. Gokak, in fact, is known for this beautiful waterfall, which becomes a thunderous body during the monsoon and has a lovely bridge over it. To harness its enormous energy, the first hydro-electric plant was set up here in 1887; it still exists, with the beautiful original machinery, though it's been modified a bit. You can get a nice angle of the factory itself, with its entire façade running along the river.

Sarangarh

One place where you least expect to find a large palace is Chhattisgarh. However, Sarangarh has the huge and wonderful Giri Vilas, which was a Gondh raja's palace. In the same complex used to be one of the high courts of India, which got decommissioned. The complex is layered with older palaces that were left as they were as new wings were added. The newest is Giri Vilas, which has a tall clock tower and is quite imposing. The complex's layered aspects are worth capturing on camera.

Aul

Located in Odisha's Kendrapara district, Aul lies just north of Cuttack. You arrive at this beautiful palace, not high and mighty but low-slung, laid out with a small lagoon as a backdrop. It lies along the banks of the Kharasrota river. There are a couple of temples in town. The nearby Bhitarkanika Sanctuary is home to saltwater crocodiles—another place to abandon your camera to its charms. If you want to catch the beauty of the tidal water and the palace surrounds, the early morning light is best. For shooting the wild verdure, go for the evening light.

Tranquebar

South of Puducherry on the Tamil Nadu coast, Tranquebar, or Tharangambadi, is an amazing place. There are the remains of a Chola temple; the Dansborg Fort along the beach, one of whose walls now goes into the sea; and a few roads with lovely buildings, some restored after being damaged by the tsunami.

Sirpur

Sirpur is an amazing heritage site in Chhattisgarh with its Jain, Hindu and Buddhist temples. Of the 180 or 200 mounds that have been discovered, only a few have been opened up and already 30 to 40 temples have been found. The stone that was used is kind of fossilised, possibly dating to the 7th century, and the carvings are stunning. You could spend an entire day walking, from the remnants of a Buddhist monastery to the temples, some of them scattered in the middle of fields.

INDIA PICTURE

Karauli

Karauli is a spectacular fortress town in Rajasthan. The entire town came up around the peripheral walls of the fortress that comes down to this beautiful lake by which there are also ghats, where funeral pyres would be lit. The main palace, which dates to the 13th century, is a photographer's delight. There's the Durbar Hall and the zenanas overlooking it; the zenanas have this incredible carpeted flooring, which is actually painted.

—with Ranee Sahaney

By **AJEET BAJAJ**

Padma Shri Ajeet Bajaj is one of the few persons in the world to have completed the Explorer's Grand Slam

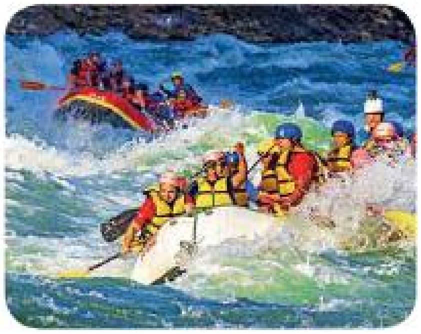
DAREDEVILRY AND DELIGHT

Given India's geographic diversity, it isn't surprising that some of the world's best adventure travel destinations are dotted across the country

In India, we are blessed with every conceivable geographical terrain, including 73 per cent of a culturally diverse Himalayan range, a global biodiversity hotspot with rich fauna, flora and avifauna. We must leverage our natural heritage in a sustainable manner and aim to be among the 10 best adventure destinations in the world by 2030. The Ministry of Tourism, Government of India, has constituted the National Board for Adventure Tourism, which will be a game-changer for the sustainable development of adventure tourism in the country. Here is a list of my 10 best adventure travel destinations in India.

Bir Billing

A magnificent backdrop of the snow-clad Dhauladhar range and ideal flying conditions have made Bir Billing the aerosports capital of India and one of the best paragliding sites on the planet. This is a great place for beginners to learn the fine art of paragliding and also for first-timers to do tandem flights with seasoned professionals.



Rishikesh

The yoga capital of the world has become the rafting capital and prime adventure hub of India. The Ganga is a pool and drop river with calm, serene sections between the adrenaline-pumping rapids. The riverine beaches here are a special attraction. Other than river rafting and kayaking, bungee jumping, ziplining across the Ganga, adventure parks and wildlife safaris in Rajaji National Park have made Rishikesh and adjoining areas an attractive destination for adventure-seekers.

Andaman & Nicobar Islands

By far the best water sports and scuba diving destination in the country, the clear water, abundant marine life and corals add up to make diving in the Andamans a special experience, ideal for first-timers as well as seasoned pros. Kayaking along the mangrove-lined coast is the best way to explore the archipelago. Night sea kayaking with bioluminescence and visiting Barren Island, an active volcano, are special attractions.

Tawang

The entire state of Arunachal Pradesh is abuzz with adventure, with Tawang as the special hub. Getting to Tawang itself is an adventure, crossing Sela Pass at 13,700 ft and visiting the Nuranang Falls at Jung. Visiting Bum La Pass (15,200 ft) on the India-Tibet border, Zimithang (14,000 ft), and Shonga-tser Lake are must-do adventures.

Photographs by SHUTTERSTOCK

BHARAT AGGARWAL

Gulmarg

Himalayan ski paradise with ideal slopes for beginners and pro skiers looking for 'curry powder', Gulmarg offers up to 4,000 ft of off-piste powder skiing. Asia's highest cable car taking you to Apharwat peak (14,000 ft), verdant forests, high Himalayan peaks, Kashmiri hospitality and après-ski all add up to give Gulmarg the reputation of India's premier ski hub.

Sikkim

More than the stunning landscapes, it's the friendly, 'happy camper' Sikkimese who make trekking in Sikkim an unforgettable experience. Kanchenjunga at 28,169 ft is the crowning glory of Sikkim. The Teesta and Rangit rivers, alpine meadows, serene monasteries and Sikkimese momos all combine to make Sikkim every adventurer's dream.

Spiti

Abode of the 'grey ghost of the Himalaya', the snow leopard, Spiti is an adventure Shangri La, where time stands still. Rudyard Kipling described Spiti best in Kim: "At last they entered a world within a world...surely the Gods live here." Buddhist monasteries and villages dot the landscape with the Spiti river and snow-covered peaks dominating the rugged terrain.

Meghalaya

With over 1,200 limestone caves, Meghalaya is the most happening caving destination in India. The state is also gaining popularity as a year-round camping destination, except during the high-intensity monsoon period. Other popular activities include ziplining, rappelling, kayaking, trekking and canyoning. The 'Cherrapunji Root Bridge Hike' in the dense tropical forest is a popular hike in the region.

Ballooning in Rajasthan

A top-of-the-world experience. Floating effortlessly, watching the spectacular world below with forts, *havelis*, lakes and the arid landscape of the Aravallis is mesmerising. Meeting the friendly farmers and shepherds after landing adds to the exuberance of ballooning in Rajasthan. A hot-air balloon ride over Amber Fort near Jaipur should be on every adventurer's bucket list.

Zanskar and Kargil

With a new road across Shingo La and improved access, Zanskar and Kargil are becoming a trekking, mountaineering and motorcycling hub. There are several adventure opportunities in the region, from climbing the 7,000 metres-plus Nun and Kun peaks, to the 'Chadar' trek along the frozen Zanskar in the winter months and rafting expeditions on the river.

By **SHENAZ TREASURY**

Actor and presenter; also one of India's leading travel content creators

Rest and Reboot

India is brimming with hotspots of healing and relaxation, offering a range of traditional therapies, and some you've never tried

Kerala

INDIA PICTURE

The country's pre-eminent wellness destination is renowned for its exhaustive range of traditional massages and Ayurvedic therapies, including panchakarma treatment, abhyanga massage and healing techniques like shirodhara. From luxurious resorts located in scenic natural landscapes to modest retreats offering healing programmes with a view of the ocean or the backwaters to boot, Kerala is the place to be for all-round wellness. In Kovalam, Somatheeram Ayurveda Village (supposed to be the world's first Ayurveda beach resort) is a complete yoga and healing centre.

INDIA PICTURE

Uttarakhand

Dubbed the world's yoga capital, Rishikesh's cup runs over with yoga and nutritional healing, with retreats available at every corner. Rishikesh hosts the renowned International Yoga Festival, too, but if you aren't one for the mad rush of a yoga festival, wellness resorts such as Vana Retreat in Dehradun and Ananda in the Himalayas near Rishikesh offer not only Ayurvedic massages and yoga, but also sowa-rigpa healing and extensive spa-and-massage programmes in a calming forest setting.

Tamil Nadu

Sound healing has quietly made waves in the past few years, and there's nowhere better to experience this than Auroville, where Svaram Sound Experience conducts hour-long sound baths or healing sessions. Or head to Arka Wellness Centre (with a guest house) within the township, where a range of holistic healing techniques can be undertaken, from yogic healing massages and reiki to therapeutic interventions from all over the world.

Ladakh

Ladakh promises a slow life where you immerse yourself headlong into nature, benefitting from the nutritious organic produce (it abounds in seasonal fruits, including apricots, apples, peaches and mulberries). Of late, yoga and wellness retreats where participants are taught breathwork and meditation have also come up. Many eco-resorts offer Tibetan healing sessions and travellers can sign up for amchi sessions (consultations with local practitioners of Tibetan medicine).

INDIA PICTURE

INDIA PICTURE

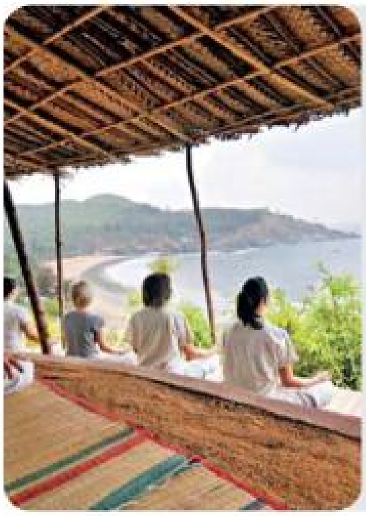
Sikkim

The Lepchas have for a long time taught about the salubrious powers of the hot springs of the region, but these revitalising spots have remained hidden to the outside world. Locally referred to as *tatopani* (hot spring/s), many of these can be visited in North Sikkim (LhabaTarum near Lachen; Reshi near Gyalshina) and elsewhere (Ralong, Borong and Gangyap). From skin detoxification and improved blood circulation to stress reduction, the benefits of a dip in a hot spring are many.

SHUTTERSTOCK

Goa

As a healing destination, Goa is to India what Bali is to the rest of Asia. And so, the tiny seaside state needs no introduction as a wellness hub. It has the best of yoga and sound healing centres. A number of places teach ashtanga yoga and hatha yoga and alternative therapies conducted include chakra healing. There are also conscious living retreats where visitors can undertake detox and holistic wellness programmes.



Karnataka

Three hours south of Goa, a seaside town on the Konkan coast might just give you your next favourite yoga retreat. Spread over 26 acres of forest close to Om Beach, SwaSwara has hatha yoga and pranayama, dosha identification, panchakarma-cleansing and targeted therapies such as snehanam and swedanam. Near Kudle Beach, the Gokarna Yoga School operates from November to March, offering Iyengar Yoga classes for posture and breathing improvement.

Maharashtra

Small towns nestled in scenic natural environs are fast seeing a spurt in relaxing getaway spots. Atmantan near Pune, a luxury wellness resort boasting panchakarma and restorative physiotherapy, overlooks the Mulshi lake. In Vadgaon, Fazlani Nature's Nest, a resort offers equine therapy (a unique technique that engages horses in healing), Ayurveda and naturopathy.

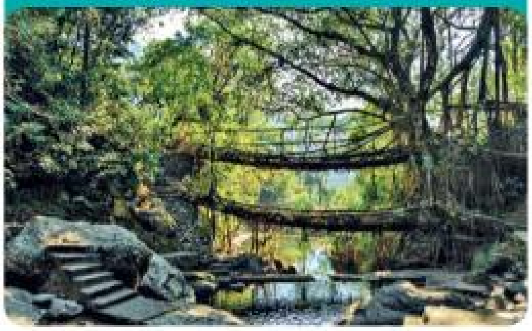
MANDAR DEODHAR

Punjab

For many, getting away from city life and settling down for a few days in bucolic surrounds is food for both body and soul. The northern Indian farmstay experience in India's breadbasket ticks most boxes. Citrus County in Hoshiarpur, Prakriti Farms in Rupnagar and The Kothi in Gurdaspur—the state has no dearth of comfortable stays with a rustic touch, where you can partake of nutritious meals and a virtually endless supply of fresh fruits, go on nature walks and free your arms in the sprawling golden mustard fields.

Meghalaya

The use of traditional herbs in the Khasi healing system is the subject of a proposed wellness tourism project, and has even led to the setting up of the Mebaai Tribal Health and Wellness Centre in Shillong. To be able to truly absorb the Great Outdoors and experience the way locals bond with and heal from nature, go on a hike—the Living Root Bridge Trail and the David Scott Trail are two of the most famous ones in the state.



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—with Prannay Pathak

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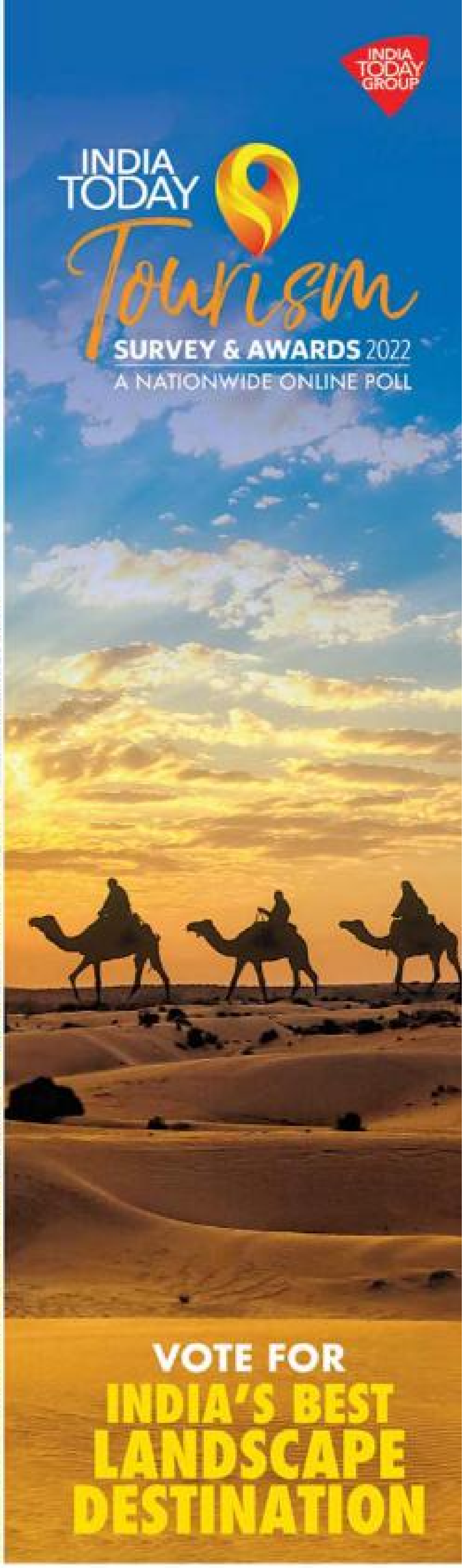
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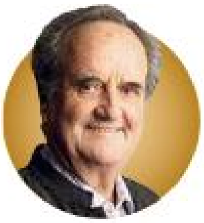
By **MARK TULLY**

Writer and former bureau chief, BBC, New Delhi



Full Steam Ahead

A veteran trainspotter remembers some of his favourite railway trips

INDIA PICTURE

Darjeeling Himalayan Railway

I loved the journey on the Darjeeling Himalayan Railway during my school days. The train passes through beautiful forested country, moving on from the plains in the early stages from Siliguri station to the very top to Ghum, the highest railway station in India, from where you can get views of Mt Khangchendzonga.

INDIA PICTURE

Kalka-Shimla Railway

After an overnight journey from Delhi on the Howrah-Kalka Express, one can connect with the Kalka-Shimla Railway. It was a train that carried the civil servants and the Viceroy and his entourage when the Raj moved from Calcutta to the summer capital of Shimla every year. The last stage of the journey was absolutely beautiful as the train moved through the foothills of the Himalayas to Shimla on a 2.6-ft track.

Kangra Valley Railway

The narrow-gauge Kangra Valley Railway runs from Pathankot. It used to be so crowded that once when I travelled on it with a friend of mine who was six feet tall, he couldn't put up with it because he was feeling so squashed. He just wanted to get off. But what is wonderful is that you run alongside those beautiful views of the snow-capped mountains and possibly some of the best views from an Indian train.

SHUTTERSTOCK

Patna to Bangalore

SHUTTERSTOCK

This was a rather complicated but lovely rail journey I did, where we had to change at Mughal Sarai Junction, Varanasi, Itarsi, and on to Bangalore. In Mughal Sarai, we had a lovely conversation with an official. We asked him where the train to Varanasi (which is just a short distance away) was, but he regrettably said it was indefinitely delayed. So I said to the chap: "You mean it's lost?" and he said: "Yes, you could say it's lost!" So I got a bit excited and angry and replied: "I've come all the way from Patna to catch this train to Varanasi and I'm stuck, and I'm going there for a wedding." And he said: "What can I do?" So, after a bit of an argument, he said to me: "What are we arguing about? There's another train coming in about half an hour and it's going to Varanasi and you'll get there in time." So we did get there in time. That was a very good journey.

Ratlam to Indore

Another wonderful journey, which, I think, is unfortunately being broad gauged—Ratlam to Indore. I've been down one of the most beautiful bits of the railway line, a wonderful ghat line, which ran so steeply. Back then, if you were going up the line, you had to have two engines and you looked down on this gorgeous valley below. This was part of a wonderful railway which ran from Ajmer to Kacheguda near Secunderabad/Hyderabad. When I caught it from Ratlam to the bottom of the ghat line to Indore, it was crowded with milkmen going home with their huge milk cans hanging on the side. The train would stop at some stations for rather a long time, because the milkmen got out to clean their milk churns, and got the driver to let off steam while they did so.

SHUTTERSTOCK

Guwahati to Itanagar

There's a lovely railway journey on the new line going from Guwahati in Assam to Naharlagun near Itanagar. Itanagar itself is rather an unprepossessing capital city, but I think it's the railway journey itself, and the short climb in the last stages with its views of the Eastern Himalayas that are very rewarding.

The Fairy Queen

I have travelled from Delhi to Alwar on the Fairy Queen and stayed the night at Sariska game park. I was travelling with a friend of mine who was a great railway man in Britain. Travelling is wonderful on this historic train which takes you to Alwar, which is full of interesting stories. We travelled with the driver, and at one point, he was going so fast that the guard had to tell him to slow down. I'm a founding member of the Indian Steam Railway Society and we have also rescued steam engines that are now installed in the Rewari Railway Heritage Museum. It's part of the last servicing steam loco shed in which is also housed the Fairy Queen, which is the world's oldest still-functional 1855-built steam locomotive tourist train.

FLICKR VISION

Maharajas' Express

I travelled on this train from Agra to what was once the Ranthambhore 'game reserve'. One of the beauties of this luxury train is you eat your meals in a very luxurious dining room. One of the sad things about railway travels now is the ever-declining standard of food.

GETTY IMAGES

HOWRAH
22585
WAP 4
E.R
HWH

INDIA PICTURE

Bombay-Howrah Mail

I love long train journeys and that feeling of being settled in a train. Once I was travelling from Bombay to Calcutta for an important programme I was doing for the BBC on the Bombay-Howrah Mail via Allahabad. It was a wonderful journey. We arrived in Calcutta sitting in the driver's cabin of the electric train. I recall two stories from this journey. There was a lady who boarded the train in Allahabad and when we chatted with her, she said: "It's a pity you couldn't come earlier, as my husband who came to see me off is a comedian and one of his best acts is imitating different snores on express trains." Another incident was when we were belting along on the train between Dhanbad and Howrah, the electricity got cut off and the train grew slower and slower. Before it came to a complete halt, the electricity came back on and the train picked up speed and we were only 11 minutes late arriving in Calcutta, which is quite an achievement.

Jabalpur Main to Nainpur Junction

I remember another marvellous journey on a two-foot railway which was from Jabalpur Main to Nainpur Junction. It's a narrow gauge, which no longer exists. Nainpur Junction used to be Asia's largest narrow gauge railway junction. We went on the small gauge for the last time. From Nainpur, we went into the forest on those wonderful railway trollies; fortunately, this one had an engine on it. There are two sad things about all this. One, it no longer exists. Second, the Nainpur Junction's station master was very sad, because, as he said to us, "I have 23 trains a day running through this junction and they say we don't need this railway." The other sad thing was actually seeing how popular the train was with passengers who told us that this is the way they had always done it, rather than going by bus or some such. And we could see in the valley below, as we were going in the trolly, the broad gauge being brought in. It was still under construction, but this one was much, much prettier, as it was following the contours of the hills.

—with Ranee Sahaney

SARIKA GANGWAL

Travelling Right

Actor **Pankaj Tripathi** on travel, the great lockdown and cinematic escapes

Did the pandemic change your travel philosophy?
I might have travelled less during the pandemic, but I don't think my travel philosophy changed. I still want to see more, wander more, but I also want to ensure that I leave a smaller carbon footprint. The pandemic, yes, has made me more conscious of what I waste. That ethic applies to travel and my life.

You came from Bihar to Bombay because you wanted to be an actor, but is it also true that you made this journey because you simply wanted to travel?
Absolutely, I became an actor because I knew it would let me travel for free. As a theatre actor, I wanted to go to Jaipur, Udaipur and Kashmir, but now I have work that allows me to see the world.

Since your job takes you to so many places, what does going on holiday feel like?
If I see a place I like while shooting, I instantly put it on the family holiday bucket list. When I go back to that place with my wife and daughter a few months later, I mostly sit quietly and take in the beauty.

If you had to pick three winter destinations for our readers this year, which would they be?
North Bengal: I think I am going to become the unannounced brand ambassador of North Bengal very soon. [Laughs] I did a film there and I stayed in places like Lataguri, Buxa Forest and Gorumara. The beauty of all these places was altogether staggering. There are tea estates there in the middle of forests and from there, you can see the Kanchenjunga. I can't wait to go back there.

Rann of Kutch: I remember being in the Rann of Kutch on a full-moon night in winter with my family. The whole experience was surreal. I am the kind of person who relies on his eyes more than his camera when he travels, so trust me when I say this—the Rann of Kutch is something else in winter.

Meghalaya: The mountains are always a treat. I am very fond of Leh-Ladakh, but for this one time, I will recommend Meghalaya. I went there two-three years ago because I really wanted to see the Dawki river and I wanted to stay in places like Shillong and Maolilong. It was a holiday I cherish.

- with Shreevatsa Nevatia

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THE GOOD LIFE

INDIA TODAY SPICE

DECEMBER 2022

RNI NO. DELENG/2005/15332 *Not for sale. To be circulated free with India Today in Mumbai, Delhi & NCR, Chennai, Bengaluru, Kolkata, Hyderabad and Chandigarh. *Supplement to India Today issue dated January 2, 2023

Gaj Singh II of Jodhpur

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Volume 18 Number 12; December 2022

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Printed and published by Manoj Sharma on behalf of Living Media India Limited. Printed at Thomson Press India Limited, 18-35 Milestone, Delhi Mathura Road, Faridabad-121007, (Haryana).
Published at F-26, First Floor, Connaught Place, New Delhi-110001.
Editorial/Corporate Office: Living Media India Ltd., India Today Group Mediaplex, FC-8, Sector-16A, Film City, Noida - 201301.
Editor: Raj Chengappa

India Today does not take responsibility for returning unsolicited publication material.

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LETTER FROM THE EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

BOTH HISTORY AND HEDONISM WRESTLE FOR ATTENTION on the *Spice* plate this issue as we pack in food for thought and thought for food. This ode to 'eating' goes beyond craving, habit or even culture, discovering food as identity. It is this transformational power to evoke memory and play to the senses that underscores the relevance of heritage cuisine and its recent resurgence on fine-dining menus.

All conversations about traditional food and heritage ingredients eventually veer towards Rajasthan, so it's only natural that our first pit stop is at the storied Umaid Bhawan Palace, where the royals have kept the fires of their culinary traditions burning bright. Who better than Gaj Singh II of Jodhpur, to peel back the layers of Marwar's food heritage and reveal the secrets of its kitchens? A self-confessed gourmand and repository of the state's culinary history, the royal is not shy about handling the ladle himself as well, a passion he picked up from his grandmother. Singh is just as passionate about protecting Jodhpur's food legacy as he worries about the survival of heirloom vegetables, traditional ingredients and local liqueurs such as Kesar Kasturi and Jagmohan.

Royal predilections aside, the state broadly offers four cuisine categories: Rajput food, in which game was a highlight; rural food, based entirely on what was available; Muslim food and the rich food of the Marwari community. Tracing the re-settlement of the Oswal Jains—an enterprising community of traders, bankers and businessmen from small villages in Rajasthan—to Murshidabad in the 18th century, *Spice* continues its culinary journey in Bengal, where these communities settled in suburbs such as Azimganj, Jiaganj, Lalbagh, Nashipur and Cossimbazar, and came to be called the Sheherwalis or 'city dwellers'. When the strictly vegetarian Sheherwali cuisine—with food habits peculiar to the arid geography of Rajasthan—colluded with the bounty of Bengal, a whole new cuisine was born.

Largely lost in the sands of time, the sheherwali cuisine is now being revived and popularised among a larger audience by the brother-sister duo of Darshan and Lipika Dudhoria of Bari Kothi, a restored rustic heritage villa hotel in Murshidabad. This family home in Murshidabad had been abandoned for 60 years. What started out it in 2015 as a passion project, is now a sprawling 15-suite heritage hotel on the banks of the Ganga. On offer, Sheherwali cuisine, of course.

Given the sheer repertoire and lengthy cooking processes involved, a proper Sheherwali thali can be intimidating, so they've broken it up into a five-course meal with detailed explanations about each dish so guests can appreciate the heritage of the cuisine fully. Led by Bari Kothi, Sheherwali cuisine is enjoying a quiet resurgence. You can also order a Sheherwali thali at Royal Vega in the ITC Royal Bengal in Kolkata; Sheherwali cloud kitchen concepts have also taken off in the city and are quite popular.

Offering heritage food from homes in southern India seems to have been the ace that landed New York City-based restaurant, Semma, a Michelin star, becoming the only Indian cuisine restaurant in the US to win the honour this year. The food is devoid of unnecessary embellishments and served in the traditional way. The Chettinad-styled venison isn't served in silverware; it comes in a clay pot, while the spicy goat curry is neatly presented in a box made of banana leaf.

While food goes traditional, spirits raise the bar with ingenuity and innovation, to reimagine, reinvent and offer the unprecedented. This is why ageing and cask-finishing different spirits in wine barrels is trending, spilling over from whiskies to agave-based drinks, brandies, and even coffee now. After all, surprise is the spice of life.

Here's hoping that 2023 is replete with pleasant surprises!

(Aroon Purie)

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THE MAHARAJA AND HIS MELTING POT

EXPLORING THE SECRETS OF JODHPUR'S ROYAL KITCHENS

ON THE COVER HH GAJ SINGH II OF JODHPUR, **COVER PHOTOGRAPH** BANDEEP SINGH **LOCATION** UMAID BHAWAN PALACE, JODHPUR

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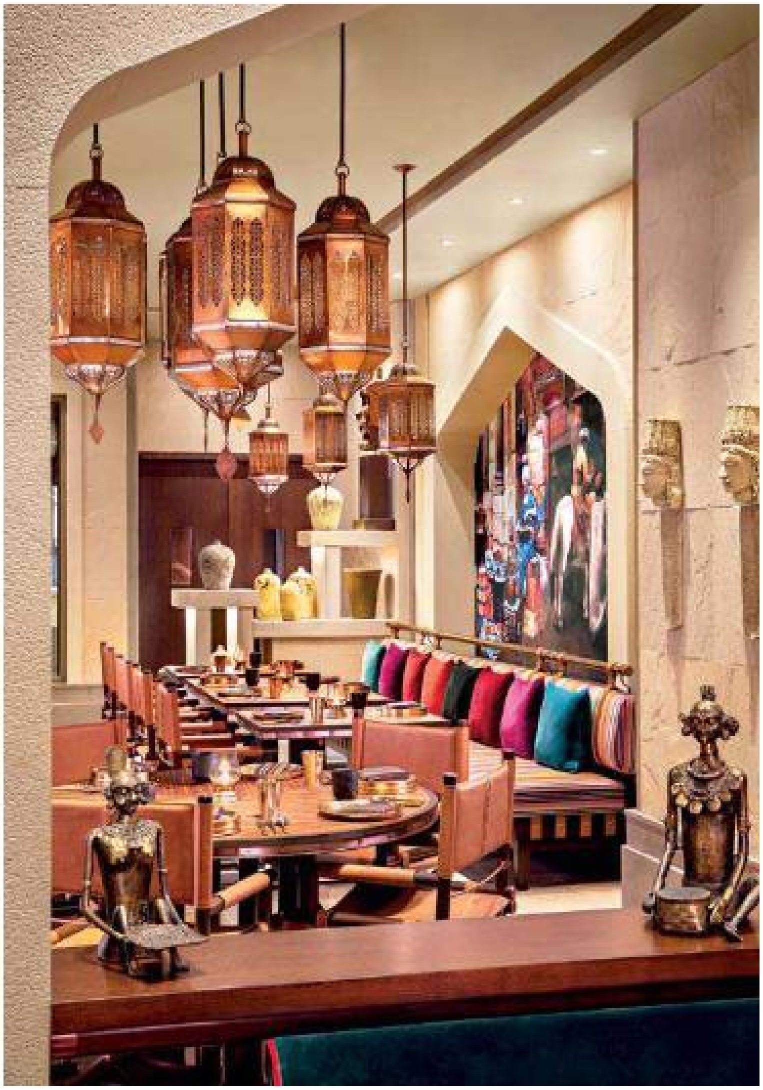

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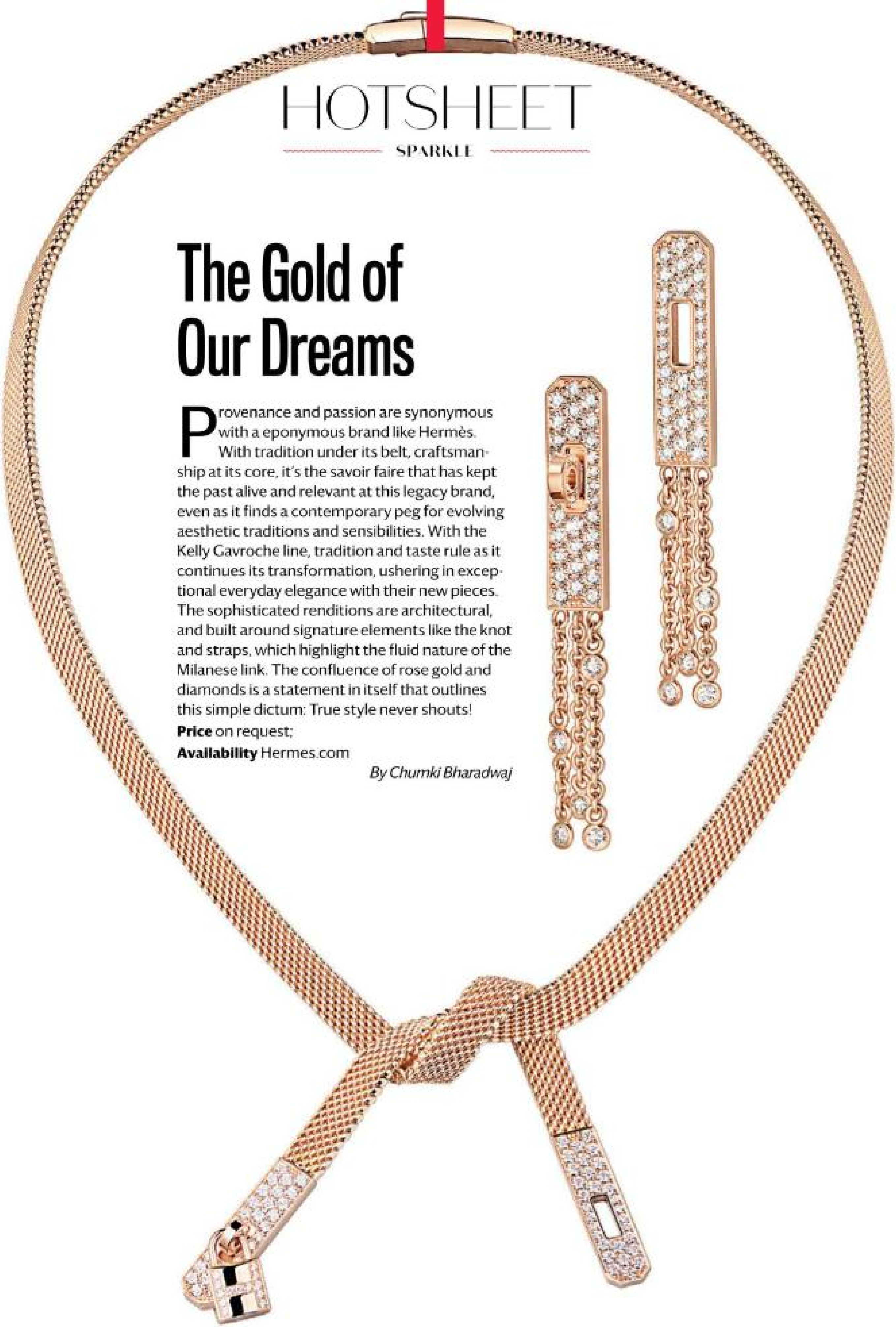
LASTLOOK

The Gold of Our Dreams

Provenance and passion are synonymous with a eponymous brand like Hermès. With tradition under its belt, craftsmanship at its core, it's the savoir faire that has kept the past alive and relevant at this legacy brand, even as it finds a contemporary peg for evolving aesthetic traditions and sensibilities. With the Kelly Gavroche line, tradition and taste rule as it continues its transformation, ushering in exceptional everyday elegance with their new pieces. The sophisticated renditions are architectural, and built around signature elements like the knot and straps, which highlight the fluid nature of the Milanese link. The confluence of rose gold and diamonds is a statement in itself that outlines this simple dictum: True style never shouts!

Price on request;
Availability Hermes.com

By Chumki Bharadwaj



HOTSHEET

BEAUTY

Celeb Glow

Pronounced Eighty Two East (82°E), and promoted by Deepika Padukone, the brand reflects the actress's personal and professional journey as a modern woman. Intended to simplify the practice of self-care, the products are simple and effective such as this Ashwagandha Bounce moisturiser.

Price ₹2,700 for 50ml; **Availability** exclusively on 82e.com

TRIED & TESTED

Light and creamy, it melts on the skin—perfect for normal skin and mild winters. For more extremes, you may need to layer with a face oil, or use the brand's other hero product Patchouli Glow drops.

Ashwagandha Bounce
REJUVENATING MOISTURISER with ASHWAGANDHA and SODIUM HA
82°E

Skin Splash

This is the perfect recipe for instant hydration and nourishment. But it's a process: cleanse with the gentle face wash; follow up with the low molecular weight Hyaluronic Acid serum, and finally seal it with the feather-light Do-It-All Moisturiser.

Price ₹2,678; GIFT BOX Keep-It-Fresh face wash; Hydro Drip Hyaluronic Acid Serum; Do-It-All Moisturizer; **Availability** https://ottskyncare.com/collections/gift-sets/products/hydration-station

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TRANSFORMATIVE SOUNDARYA NIGHT CREAM WITH 24K GOLD

Gold Standard

Another addition to the iconic Soundarya Collection, this allegedly transformative Soundarya Night Cream from Forest Essentials holds gold as key to beauty. It is created with 24 carat gold, backed by breakthrough ayurvedic ingredients, and holds the "potent power of the moon' to foster healing energy.

Price ₹7,500; **Availability** Brand Stores

Twin Pleasures

Shower oils are a winter boon since they cleanse and moisturise, simplifying morning ablutions. The Kokum Almond Cleansing Shower Oil, a new drop from Kama Ayurveda is a delightful blend of two effective humecants. and it smells heavenly.

Price ₹1,750 for a 200ml; **Availability** www.kamaayurveda.com and brand stores

TRIED & TESTED

The lightweight formulation makes it effective, yet elevates body care to spa time. Better still, it's mildly scented and works well to add fragrance without a heavy synthetic scent.

KAMA
KOKUM ALMOND
CLEANSING SHOWER OIL

HOTSHEET

SPIRITS

BELVEDERE
VODKA
POLAND

Pure of Spirit

Belvedere Vodka's new variant Belvedere Pure is made with high quality Polska rye, purified water and a distillation process by fire. Shaken or stirred, indulge to make the most prosaic appear passionate. What's more, it contains zero additives, and is certified kosher.

Price ₹3,735 (Delhi); ₹6,176 (Mumbai); Bangalore ₹6,197; **Availability** Retail stores

Glenfiddich
GRAN
RESERVA
21

Reserve the Best

The world's most awarded single malt whisky "Gran Reserva" comes home with its 21-year-old expression. This remarkable whisky is matured in a combination of American and European oak casks for 21 years and finished for four months in bourbon barrels, seasoned with Glenfiddich's own Caribbean rum. Can we hope for a better Christmas gift?

Price ₹ 29,755 (Delhi); ₹27,000 (Gurgaon); ₹21,000 (Karnataka); ₹31,500 (Mumbai); **Availability** Leading liquor stores

Season's Greetings

Courtyard Memories has launched a unique ale for the winter season–Mulled Ginger Ale. The ale pairs spiced citrus flavours with the delicate sharpness of Himalayan ginger to create a delectable winter drink that is best reserved for sun-dappled afternoons and served warm with red wine, dark rum or brandy.

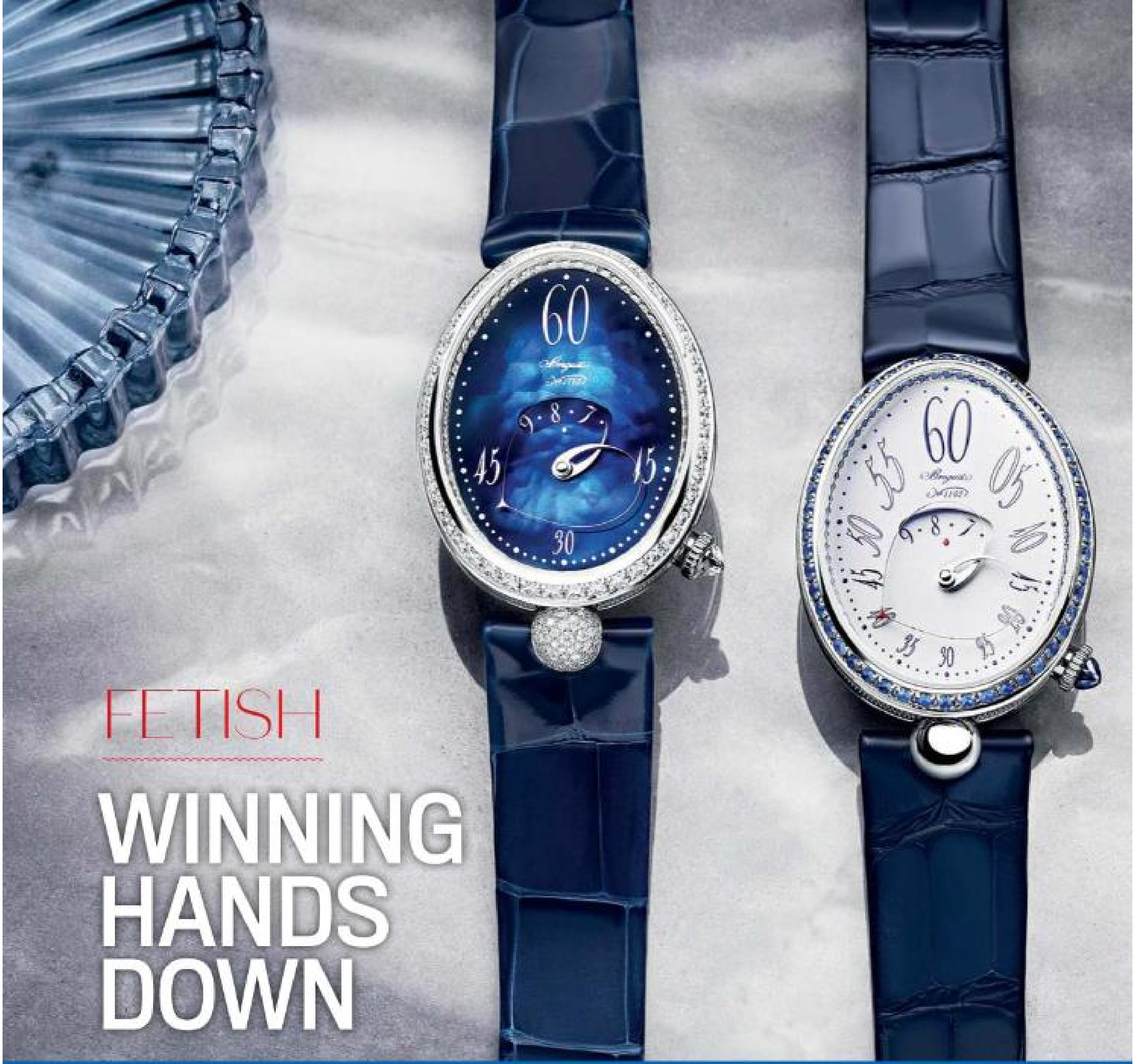
Price ₹700 (450 ml); **Availability** NCR; kazeliving.com

SKINNY WITCH
SKINNY WITCH

Going Healthy

Skinny Witch has added more reasons to be bubbly, since this Prosecco from 'House of Skull X is a guilt-free version. 'Skinny Witch'–an ode to health-conscious connoisseurs–is free from any added sugar. With two variants on offer: Skinny Witch Rosé Prosecco and Skinny Witch Prosecco DOCG, all we can say is Salud!

Price ₹3,350 (rose); ₹2,990 (brut); **Availability** Retail Stores (Delhi and NCR)

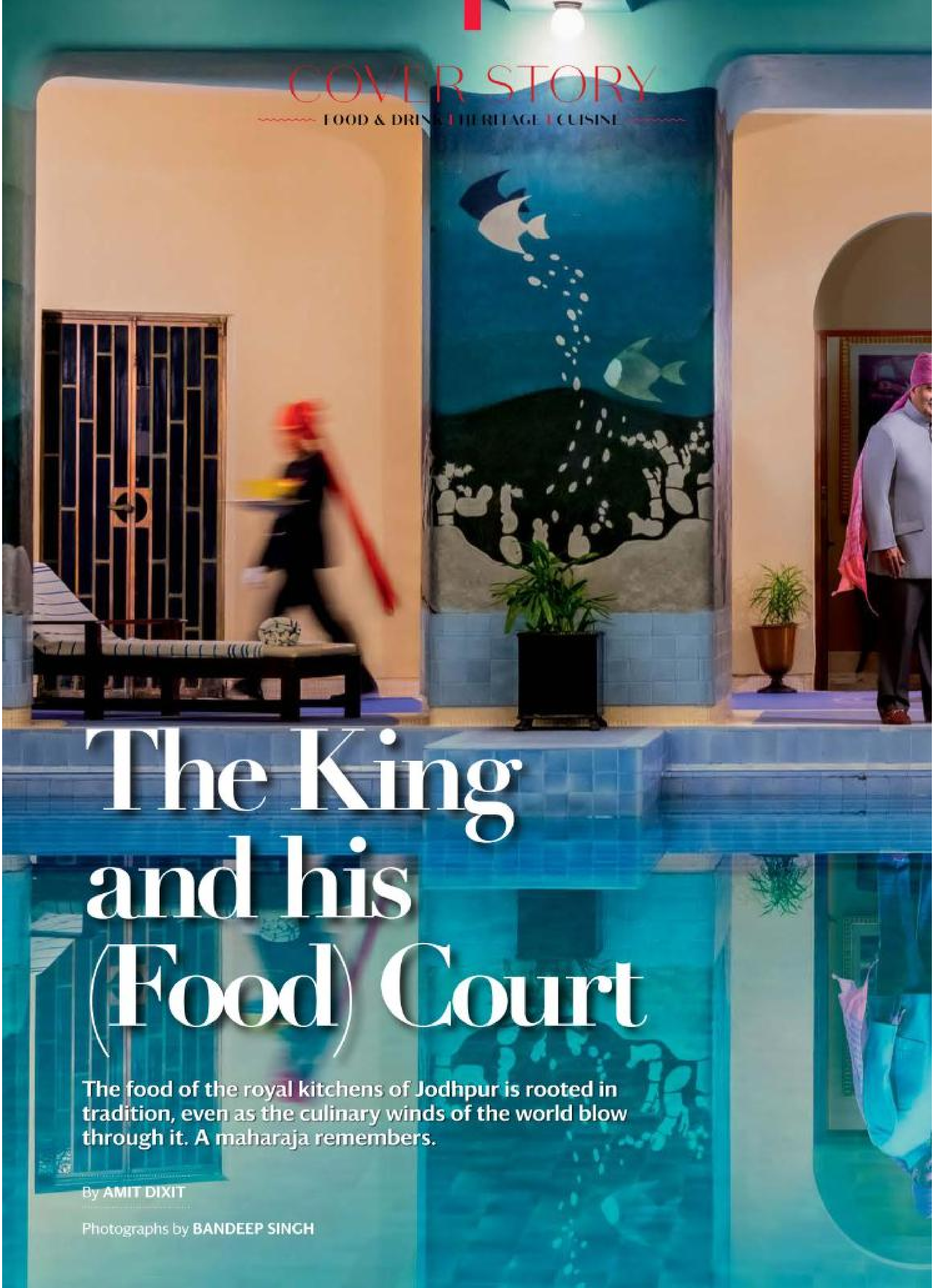


FETISH

WINNING HANDS DOWN

Turning the spotlight on two new timepieces—Reine de Naples 9835 & 9838—luxury watch brand Breguet does a stellar job of reimagining the classic with an eye on innovation to awe and delight. The two models showcase two individual styles, but with one impressive commonality: The minutes hand adopts a variety of shapes in the course of its path around the dial. This is precisely the kind of magic that lends an additional touch of character to an iconic collection such as The Reine de Naples.

This collection is emblematic of feminine-oriented watchmaking that Breguet has perfected over the years. Although the original shape is oblong, it has now evolved to oval, featuring curves that make it instantly recognisable. These two new timepieces are a magnificent example of that feminine aesthetic and are distinguished by their inherent originality. In the first model, the white gold case elegantly contrasts with the midnight blue mother-of-pearl dial. Its flange, bezel and lugs are set with 161 diamonds, while the crown bears a briolette-cut diamond, with 28 diamonds adorning its folding clasp. In the second watch, the white lacquered dial strikes a sunning contrast with its midnight blue alligator strap. Its white gold case features a bezel, flange and crown set with blue sapphires. Orchestrating a perfect symphony of beauty, technology and precision, this is Breguet at its glorious best.

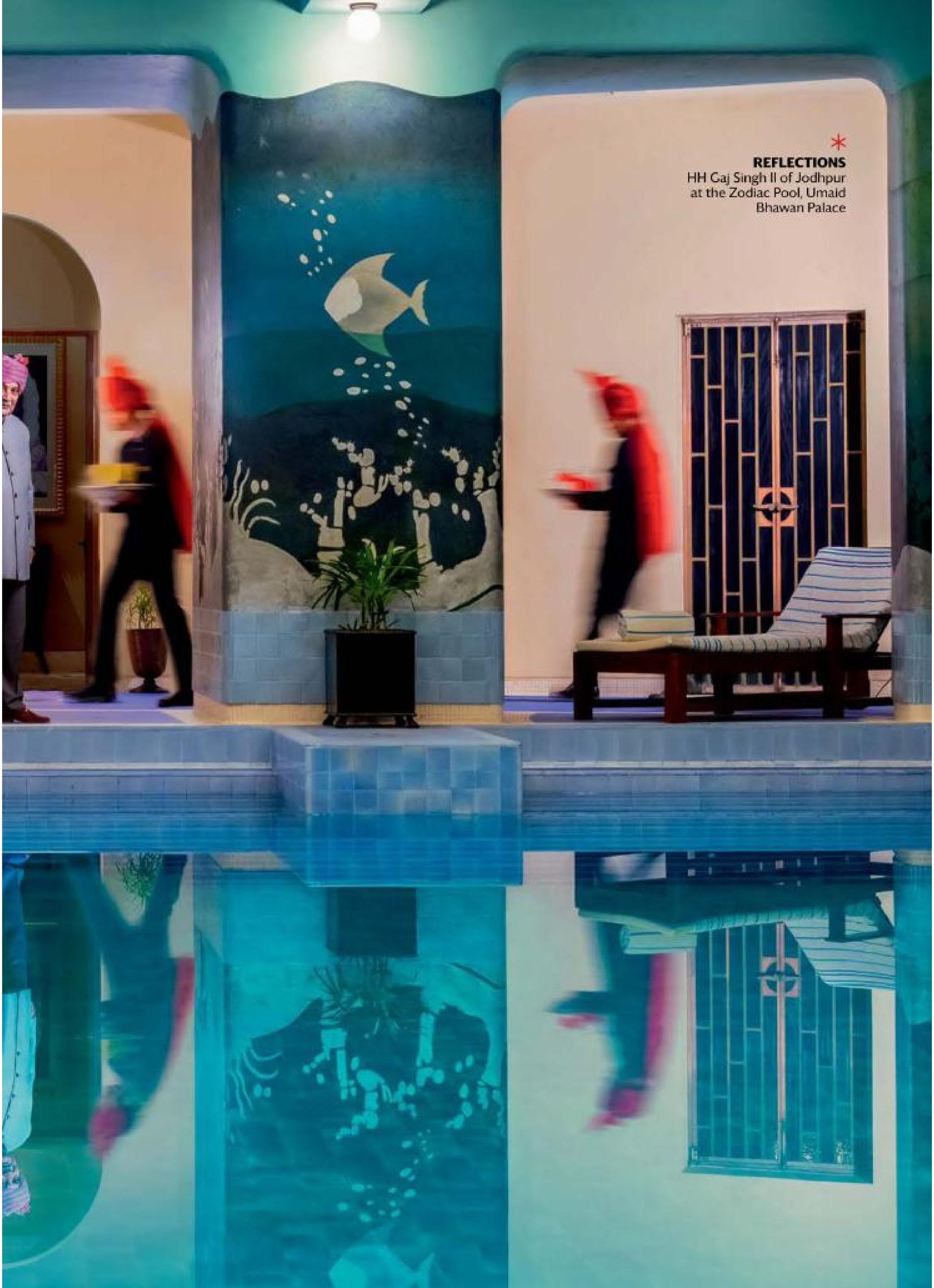


The King and his (Food) Court

The food of the royal kitchens of Jodhpur is rooted in tradition, even as the culinary winds of the world blow through it. A maharaja remembers.

By **AMIT DIXIT**

Photographs by **BANDEEP SINGH**



*
REFLECTIONS
HH Gaj Singh II of Jodhpur at the Zodiac Pool, Umaid Bhawan Palace

Did you know that the best kachoris anywhere in Rajasthan are made by halwais from Jodhpur? Or that the key ingredient of laal maas—the Mathania chilli, which lends the dish its fiery red colour—hails from Jodhpur? Or that Kesar Kasturi, the iconic heritage liquor of Rajasthan, is made from an official recipe of the erstwhile Jodhpur State?

All conversations about Rajasthani food eventually veer towards Jodhpur, making landfall at Umaid Bhawan Palace, where the royals have kept the fires of their culinary traditions burning bright and steady. Who better to peel back the layers of Marwar's food heritage and reveal the secrets of its kitchens than its greatest custodian?

We've answered the summons and await an audience at the Umaid Bhawan Palace, the royal residence that's now one of the best palace hotels in the world. HRH Gaj Singh II of Jodhpur—fondly called 'Bapji'—walks in suddenly, through some sort of secret door, and settles down for a chat.

With his 75th birthday celebrations coming up soon, Singh looks elegantly understated. Back from a slew of family weddings and gearing up for Jodhpur's annual polo season, the Maharaja has graciously squeezed us into his schedule.

His earliest memory of food revolves around his grandmother. "She would take great pleasure in feeding me," he says, "This was at the Rai Ka Bagh Palace. There was a huge terrace on which women from the extended family would be cooking. My grandmother was an excellent cook herself and would direct them." In contrast, the food at boarding school in England, where he was sent off to, was unremarkable. "It wasn't awful but it wasn't great either," says Singh drily. Perhaps, it's such varied exposure that has helped him straddle the twin worlds of tradition and modernity with ease—he is as comfortable with pit cooking a whole leg of lamb the Rajasthani way as he is with eating Japanese food when travelling the world.

From princely tables to those of more humble stature, Jodhpur takes pride in its food, which has mostly evolved in response to a harsh, arid climate. The Maharaja breaks it down precisely: "We have four broad categories: Rajput food, which was largely based upon game meat; rural food, based entirely on what was available; the rich food of the Marwari community; and the Muslim food."

Photograph Courtesy: UMAID BHAWAN PALACE

Rural fare in Jodhpur revolves around millets. Besan (gram flour) is a mainstay, the base for dishes like gatta, pithor and rabodi, which can be stored for a long time. Water being scarce, vegetables are few, so wild ingredients like ker, kumatia, sangri and neem flowers have made it to the kitchen. This does not mean the food is not delicious; on the contrary, it is an explosion of flavours. "I remember going to villages and being fed," says Singh, "I used to tell them the food is very good but they would be embarrassed."

The food of the royal kitchens is all this, plus a generous sprinkling of external influences, including the West. "Initially we had Goan cooks as well as British staff working for the State," says Singh, "So there were pies and roasts and mince cutlets. And lots of puddings—tipsy, treacle, plum..." Singh's grandfather was friends with Hari Singh of Kashmir, and some dishes came from there, like safed maas. The other influence that weighed in was through marriages. "My mother was from Gujarat. She brought a maid with her who cooked Kathiawadi food," says Singh, "which isn't sweet like typical Gujarati fare." Bandeep Singh, our photographer, tells Singh that he reminds him of a giant, protective, banyan tree. The Maharaja brushes it off with a laugh and a twinkle in his

RABODI KA SAAG 4 Portions

INGREDIENT

Dry Rabodi 300 gram, Ghee 60 gram, Asafoetida 4 gram, Whole jeera 5 gram, Yoghurt 50 gram, Turmeric powder 5 gram, Red chilli powder 10 gram, Chopped garlic 20 gram, Coriander powder 10 gram, Dry methi 5 gram, Chopped onion 20 gram, Salt to taste

METHOD

1. Soak dry rabodi in water for 2 hours.
2. Heat ghee and add asafoetida, cumin seeds, chopped onion, and chopped garlic.
3. Once start crackling, add yoghurt and dry spices.
4. Keep stirring on a low flame for 5 minutes.
5. Add soaked rabodi and 300 ml boiling water to the pan. Garnish with fresh coriander.

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PALACE PLATTER
Jodhpur is the place to try a Rajasthani thali. And it doesn't get better than the regal version at the Umaid Bhawan Palace (don't miss the gold-plated chilli) (Above); An ornate napkin ring (Top right); Rajasthani dishes like Rabodi ka Saag are based on dry ingredients (Left)

LAAL MAAS

4 Portions

INGREDIENTS

Ghee 200 ml, Garlic paste 30 gram, Ginger paste 30 gram, Onion slices 300 gram, Lamb cut 1 Kg (with bone or without bone), Deggi mirch powder 100 gram, Tomato paste 500 gram, Mix Garam masala whole (bay leaf, green cardamom, cinnamon stick, black cardamom) 10 Gram, Salt to taste

METHOD

1. **Heat ghee, then add whole garam masala.**
2. **Add sliced onion, followed by ginger and garlic paste Reduce the flame and add lamb cubes. Cook for 2 hours or until the lamb is tender.**
3. **Add chilli powder and tomato paste and cook for 15 to 20 minutes on the slow flame. When the lamb is cooked, finish the gravy with salt and seasoning. Garnish with julienned ginger.**

eye. Singh's protective instinct extends to Jodhpur's food legacy too, worried as he is about the survival of heirloom vegetables and traditional ingredients. Jodhpur is the home of the Mathania chilli, an essential ingredient for the storied laal maas. The prognosis, however, is not good. "The Mathania chilli is sadly almost extinct," says Singh, "You mostly get hybrids now." The original Mathania variety was large, had oodles of colour and flavour, and wasn't so teekha. The new chillies are smaller and have more heat, but cooks follow the old recipes and use the same amount of chillies—and the heat quotient goes off the charts. In the royal kitchens, they make it a point to source the original variety from the few farms that still grow it. "On the meat side, desi murgi tastes much better than broiler, so we keep some at Bal Samand," says Singh.

Jodhpur's mirchi bada and mogar and mawa kachodis may be the best known, but it's a cornucopia of delights here. There's kheech and bajre ka soyta. There's the rabri laddu—similar to boondi laddu but with larger beads and so soft it crumbles at the slightest touch. Laapsi, a sweet dish of broken wheat, is a must at weddings. "Since bajra is our staple, the special-occasion laapsi is made with wheat, which was considered a luxury," explains Singh. If Jaipur has sulas, Jodhpur has botas. When it was legal to do so, this skewered meat preparation was also made with venison and wild boar. "The meat is marinated before being put on the skewer. The tenderiser we use is the wild-growing kachri," says Singh. The highlight though is khad or pit cooking for meat dishes. And trust the Maharaja of the people to know the secret of a good baati of dal-baati-churma fame. "The best way to make baati is in the embers of a cow dung fire," he lets on.

The Maharaja's Melting Pot

With such deep knowledge of food and food traditions, does the Maharaja occasionally wield the ladle? "Technically I have no knowledge but I do experiment sometimes," says Singh modestly."If I make a big mess I have lots of helpers," he adds, laughing. Singh remembers being invited by Captain Amarinder Singh, the Maharaja of Patiala, for a big event to revive polo in Punjab. There was a cooking party planned. "Over a few drinks the night before, Captain Amarinder said: 'You have very good food in Jodhpur, and I'm sure you cook. Will you cook tomorrow?' I readily agreed. In the morning, I woke up and thought: what are we going to do?" They eventually decided to cook laal maas, called up Jodhpur and got the recipe for five people. But they were cooking for 120 people. The recipe was multiplied and the ingredients ordered. "When I got to my table there was this tower of ghee, all

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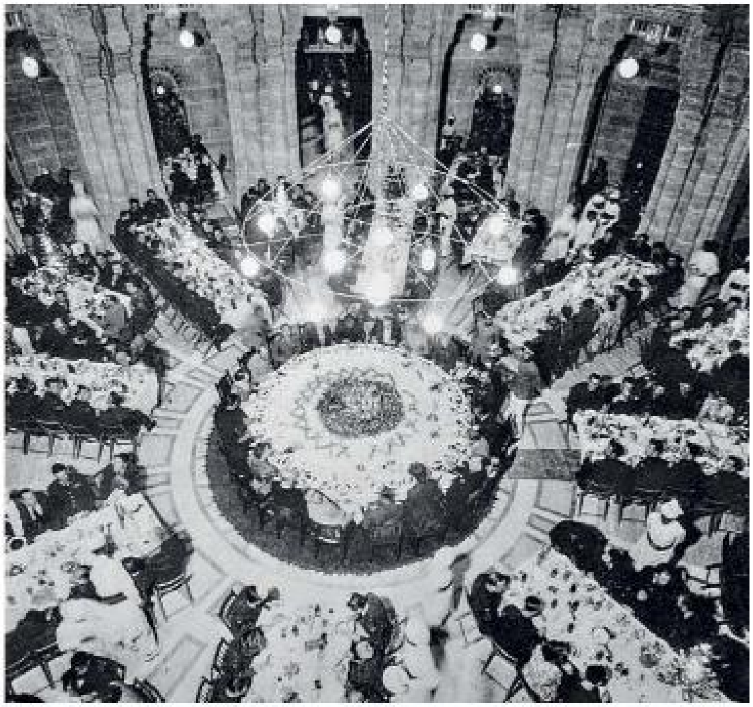
FEASTING IN STYLE
During WWII, 800 members of the RAF enjoyed the palace's hospitality over Christmas, and dinner tables in the Rotunda radiated like the spokes of a wheel (Top right).

seven kilos of it," recalls Singh. "I said 'Who ordered this?' They replied: 'You did!'" Singh improvised, got a bit stuck but luckily Jodhpur was a call away. "To finish off the recipe, I went to the bar, got three bottles of rum and poured them all in. My dish was the first to get over. The Rajmata of Patiala, who was a very good cook and a great lady, asked me for the recipe, but I kept delaying, saying...tomorrow, tomorrow."

Improvisation is one of the most innovative ways to keep the past alive. Another revival that Jodhpur has keenly overseen has been on the heritage liquor front. "When I was chairman of RTDC, I wrote to then CM Bhairon Singh Shekhawat asking him to promote heritage hotels, heritage sports and heritage alcohol. So they took two state recipes under licence from us and let the Ganganagar Sugar Mills make three-four varieties, including Kesar Kasturi and Jagmohan. We only asked for Jodhpur to be featured prominently on the bottle," says Singh.

Singh has supped at some of the finest tables in the world—Windsor Castle and Versailles among them—but closest to his heart are precious moments spent with family. Before the royals lost their privileges and shikar was still allowed, the entire family would go off in their saloons to Pokhran where every morning they would go and shoot batta (imperial sand grouse). "Pokhran was our home for two-three days," says Singh. "We would come back in the evening and cook the birds. My grandfather was keen on his game food." Singh adds, "My father, who was a big man and a strong eater, would polish off a whole chicken at one go."

Photograph Courtesy: UMAID BHAWAN PALACE



There is an arresting image, of the first-ever banquet held at Umaid Bhawan under the central dome, the heaving tables radiating out like the spokes of a carriage wheel. Those days of happy excesses are long gone, but the royal kitchens of Jodhpur remain open to experimentation. "We are concentrating on healthy food and going back to the original recipes," says Singh. In fact, when it comes to dieting, the health-conscious Maharaja, who is known for his fondness of Rolls Royce cars, is partial to the General Motors diet, which he does occasionally.

Aman Nath, author of ***Jodhpur's Umaid Bhawan: The Maharaja of Palaces***, says, "Bapji, more than any of the other royals in the gun-salute line, balances the past and present on his most able shoulders. The way he has seen loss and austerity from the age of four, has set him in a different mould. Banquets became a thing of the past. The glory of venison and wild boar and partridge and fowl—cooked over slow fires—he has seen it all. His ancestors had long heard the parched voice of their land without water better than the opulence which so naturally ran in their veins."

I went to Jodhpur looking for lavish lifestyles, royal surfeit and tables bending under the weight of silver salvers, but found restraint, grace and wisdom. Jodhpur's food legacy is in good hands—and they can still make a mean curry when the occasion demands.

FOOD & DRINK

CUISINE | HERITAGE

Cream of the Crop

The Sheherwali cuisine which evolved in Murshidabad is completely vegetarian—but it is as lavish as it gets

By **AMIT DIXIT**

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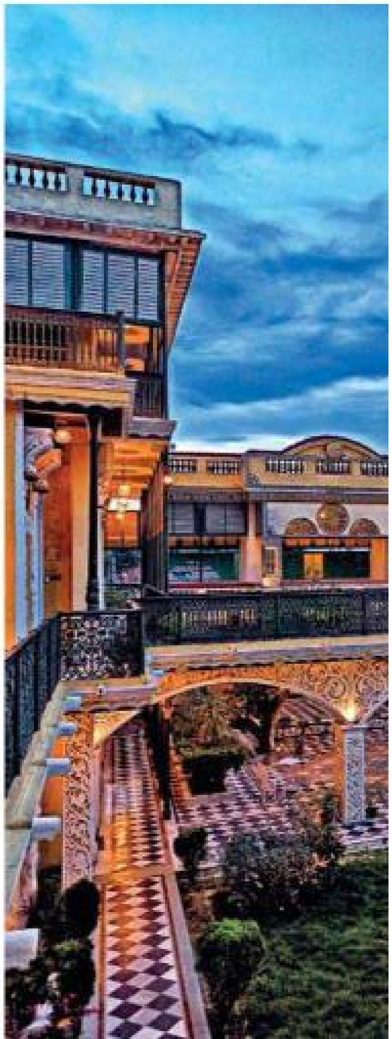
RESTORATION DRAMA
Bringing Bari Kothi, which was shut for around 60 years, back to its former glory (Below Right) has been a labour of love for the brother-sister duo of Darshan and Lipika Dudhoria (Below).

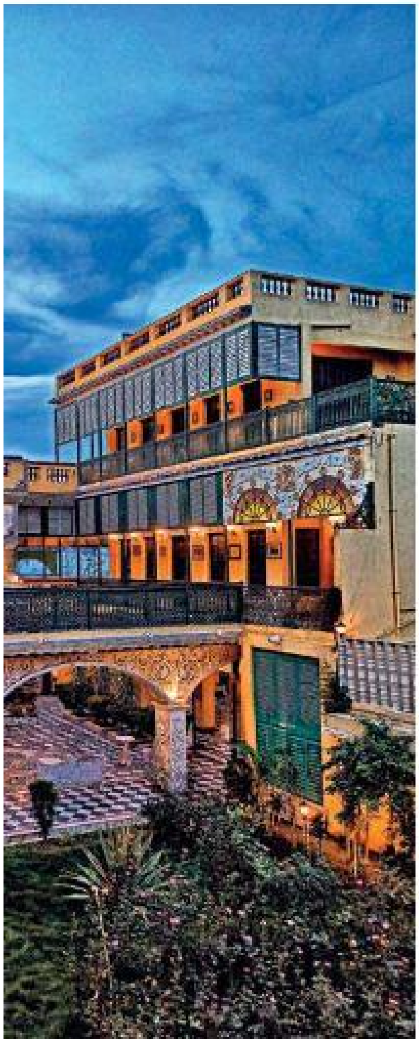


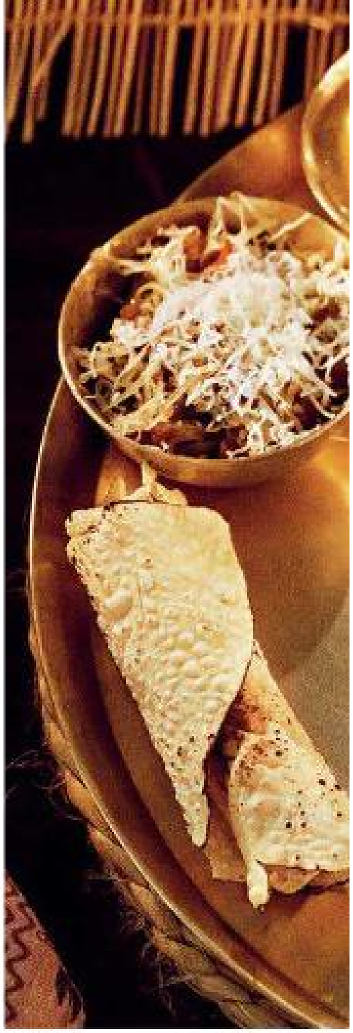
The Oswal Jains—an enterprising community of traders, bankers and businessmen—migrated from small villages in Rajasthan to Murshidabad in the 18th century in search of better prospects. They settled down in suburbs like Azimganj, Jiaganj, Lalbagh, Nashipur and Cossimbazar, and came to be called the Sheherwalis or 'city dwellers'.

With the strictly vegetarian Sheherwalis came their food habits which were peculiar to the arid geography of Rajasthan. When this cuisine collided with the bounty of Bengal, a whole new cuisine was born.

There was a time when it's unlikely you would have heard of the cuisine if you were not a Sheherwali yourself. That's until the brother-sister duo of Darshan and Lipika Dudhoria of Bari Kothi, Murshidabad took it upon themselves to popularise the cuisine among a larger audience.

The family home in Murshidabad had been abandoned for 60 years. They started restoring it in 2015 as a passion project. The luxury river cruise liners which had started plying to Murshidabad wanted to stop somewhere nice for a meal. One thing led to another and the Dudhorias ended up serving an assortment of gourds to 30 German tourists—who loved the experience. Encouraged, Darshan and Lipika plodded on with the restoration—Bari Kothi now has 15 suites on offer. And, of course, Sheherwali cuisine.





POWER FOR THE COURSE

"The first step is to take pride in what we are and what we have," says Darshan. That's why the cuisine served at Bari Kothi is pure Sheherwali—even though it requires effort to offer it, given the sheer repertoire and lengthy cooking processes involved. A proper Sheherwali thali can be intimidating, so they've broken it up into a five-course meal. Detailed explanations about each dish are provided so that guests can appreciate the heritage of the cuisine fully.

The Sheherwalis have always been open to imbibing external influences, be it in their architecture, furniture, dress or, indeed, food. As the Sheherwali community assimilates into the larger Hindu Jain community, their heritage cuisine needs to be protected.

Since the Sheherwalis hailed from a land of climatic extremes and sparse produce, the food was cooked to last a long time. The scarcity of water was compensated with the generous use of ghee and milk. Gram flour and bajra (pearl millet) were used extensively while lentils and beans stood in for fresh vegetables. The abundance of the Gangetic plains in Bengal changed all that. The new fusion cuisine continued to use elaborate cooking techniques but incorporated the new-found vegetables and local ingredients like mustard seeds. The Mughal influence is visible in the use of saffron, kewra and rosewater and is a nod to the cuisine's opulence. The cuisine is also underpinned by Jainism and its tenets—so root vegetables are a no-no. "The filling of our samosas is made with raw banana, instead of the usual peas or potatoes," says Lipika.

Above all else, this is an indulgent cuisine, obsessively fussy and geared to enticing the most

A FARMER'S MEAL FIT FOR ROYALTY

Apart from serving Sheherwali–the regal vegetarian cuisine of Murshidabad–Bari Kothi also serves a Farmer's Meal. It breaks the monotony of those lavish Sheherwali meals while giving guests a chance to experience the typical farmer's fare of Bengal–of course, poshed up for their discerning guests.

The Farmer's Meal is a three-course affair.

Course 1 **What a Bengal farmer eats for lunch. Plain rice with starch water, alu sheddo (mashed potatoes with mustard oil), onion, green chilli, salt**

Course 2 **What a farming family would eat for a child's birthday celebration. Dal sheddho (boiled lentils), bhaja (fritters), aloo, masoor dal, puris.**

Course 3 **What they would eat at a wedding. Pulao, paneer, paanch meshano chorchori (five-vegetable stir fry), chutney, papad, mishti.**

FOOD FOR THOUGHT
Bari Kothi makes it a point to offer only Sheherwali cuisine to its guests. The food is served in courses so guests can appreciate the heritage and provenance of each dish.

SALONI MEWA KI KHICHDI

(Sweet rice with saffron)

Rich, aromatic sweetened rice flavoured and coloured with saffron. Usually served as part of a traditional thali for formal occasions. It goes perfectly with Dahi ki Khichdi and Madia.

Preparation & cooking time 30 mins

Serves 4-6

100g rice (basmati)

200g sugar

¼ cup thinly sliced almonds

¼ cup thinly slice pistachios

2 cloves

3 small cardamoms

2 pinches of saffron

2 tbsp ghee

]Boil the rice. Each grain of rice should be separate. Add the thinly sliced almonds and pistachios.

Heat the ghee in a kadhai or wok. Add the cloves and cardamoms. Add the rice and mix thoroughly. Keep it aside. Cook sugar and water on a low flame till the sugar syrup becomes one-string consistency. Add saffron to the sugar syrup. Add the rice and allow it to cool slightly.

jaded palates. For instance, in the past they would only eat the top, soft layer of the puri. "People could easily have a hundred puris at a meal," says Darshan, "but then they would be having only the top, with the rest going back to the kitchen." Pride is taken in complex preparations. The lengthy process of preparing nimas—best described as light and airy milk froth—has not deterred anyone.

At Bari Kothi they use family recipes for the dishes. These include delicacies like kheere ki kachori, khatte ka pakora, matar ki kachori, dahi ki sabzi, and so on. Then there are the sookha (dry) meals, eaten on days when no leafy vegetables are allowed in accordance with Jain tradition. This has only led them to be more creative, with dishes like papad badi ki sabzi and the Gujarat-influenced mogar ki sabzi.

THE DESSERT SONG

The Sheherwalis have a well-deserved reputation for a sweet tooth and meals often begin and end with sweets. Desserts are overloaded with sugar, as in the chhuare ka goli. "Until my grandfather's generation there was no concept of breakfast," says Darshan," They would just eat three-four different kinds of sweets with a glass of milk." In fact, one of the blocks at Bari Kothi is named Halwaikhana because that is where all the halwais (sweet makers) used to stay. "Given the opulent lifestyles of the day you wouldn't eat the same mithai every day," explains Darshan, "So naturally you had to have your own in-

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FUSION CUISINE
Since the Sheherwalis came from a land of water scarcity, food had to be compensated with a generous use of ghee and milk. The abundance of the Gangetic plains in Bengal changed that. The new fusion cuisine incorporated the new-found vegetables and local ingredients.

house halwai." It's like having your own baker!

One of the greatest Sheherwali obsessions is mangoes, from growing to eating them and even cooking with them. "We take utmost pride in mangoes, no less than 108 varieties," claims Darshan. They have truly taken mangoes into the realm of sheer indulgence. The most prized variety is the Kohitoor, a mango so delicate it has to be flipped every two hours by a team dedicated to the job. Nor can the mango be plucked with bare hands. Each Kohitoor tree produces considerably lesser fruit than typical mango trees and also takes up more space. Having a Kohitoor orchard was, therefore, a not-so-subtle display of social status.

"When the Kohitoors were ripe," says Darshan, "a ghanta (gong) would be sounded around the house to summon the family. Everyone would assemble and just have mangoes." Sheherwalis were enthusiastic growers of mangoes too, and the Kathgola Palace Dugars still have around 3,000 trees. "There's also a special way to cut them," adds Lipika, "and a special knife to cut them with." And both ripe and raw mangoes are added to vegetable dishes. "We have letters from the King of England thanking us for the mangoes," says Darshan.

This was a lifestyle born of leisure which only great wealth can sustain. Beyond indulgence, Sheherwali cuisine is mindfully seasonal. A highlight of the culinary year is chhaata or lotus pod, whose six layers have to be peeled carefully to avoid nail marks. This is then made into a tarkari (vegetable) or khichdi and is an absolute delicacy.

Sheherwali meals typically start and end with sweets. Infused with saffron and rosewater, the Bari Kothi ki kheer is legendary. Made with flour, the ghaal ka laddoo is overloaded with ghee and sugar. Not to be missed is the saloni mewa ki khichdi (sweet rice with saffron), which is similar to the more familiar meethe chawal. The cuisine sounds heavy but according to Darshan, if done properly, it's quite light.

Believe it or not, the Sheherwalis were big on bhaang, especially around Holi. Festivities went on for a week, with mithais laced with bhaang being served, especially the pista burfi, which camouflaged the bhaang well.

Today, Sheherwali cuisine is enjoying a quiet resurgence. Bari Kothi leads from the front, but you can also order a Sheherwali thali at Royal Vega in ITC Royal Bengal in Kolkata. Sheherwali cloud kitchen concepts have taken off in Kolkata and are getting quite popular. Bari Kothi fine-dining experiences in Kolkata are also being planned. One of the great heritage cuisines of India may finally get its place in the sun soon.

SANS DRAMA
Food at Semma is served the traditional way: Mulaikattiya Thaniyam–sprouted mung beans is served in a claypot, Kaikari Uttappam–rice & lentil pancake (Top middle); and Nathai Pirattal–snails is neatly presented in a box made of banana leaf; The curry leaf finds its way into the food and even cocktails (Bottom right)

Looking South

Offering heritage food from homes in southern India, Semma wins a Michelin star, becoming the only Indian cuisine restaurant in the US to win the honour this year.

By **ADITI PAI**

It's a cold December Thursday in New York. A few eager diners battle the chill, in serpentine queues, waiting to be seated at Semma, on Greenwich Avenue. Beyond the door and inside the restaurant, the warmly lit space is buzzing with guests delightfully licking the spicy curries off their fingers: the aromas of steaming bowls of ponni rice, coconut milk, curry leaves and spicy notes of gunpowder wafting through the air. It is a very busy evening, like almost every day, for Chef Vijay Kumar as he carefully inspects every dish that goes out to the tables, lending finishing touches to his culinary creations. When asked if he has managed to serve every waiting guest, he laughs, and with a tinge of regret in his voice, adds: "There are 1200 on the waiting list." It is way past midnight in New York. Roni Mazumdar, the man behind the immensely popular Michelin star restaurant, Semma, corrects him, "we have 1500 on the waiting list and it's almost the same scenario every day."

That is the popularity that Semma currently enjoys—a huge feat for an Indian restaurant in the United States, especially for one that only serves heritage cuisine from homes in southern India. In October this year, Semma created a record of sorts by being the only Indian restaurant in the US to find a place in the coveted Michelin star list, a dream and achievement for any chef or restaurateur.

Apart from hordes of patrons, a Michelin star recognition makes Semma a name to contend with; a name which loosely translated means 'wonderful' in Tamil. Of course, both chef Vijay as well as Mazumdar are elated to hear people calling referring to them as trendsetters in the world of authentic Indian food. "People say it's wonderful to get a table at Semma. Earlier, Indian restaurants were delighted to see a customer. This craze that we are seeing is because of a certain philosophy that we follow of serving food that is real and honest," says Mazumdar, who is the founder of Unapologetic Foods that has five restaurants, including Semma, under its umbrella.

Currying Favour?

Unlike the commonly-held popular perceptions about "South Indian food", the menu here harks back to Kumar's childhood spent in the villages near Madurai in Tamil Nadu. Literally, food that he has grown up eating in Arasappanpatti makes up the menu at this upscale restaurant in Greenwich Avenue—a concept that was unheard of even a few years ago. The menu features home-style food and represents the culinary traditions of the southern Indian states. So you'll find an artistically folded dosa that is an instant charmer, especially for the non-Indian diners who comprise 70 per cent of Semma's guest list; a meat-heavy dish made with goat intestines, snails cooked in a simple spice mix that is inspired by Kumar's grandmother's masala box and served on a bed of shells, Goanese oxtail, crab, lobsters and a delicately spiced Mangalorean cauliflower.

There's no pretence, no touch of "Euro-centric flavours, cooking styles or ingredients", Mazumdar emphaises), and the food is devoid of unnecessary embellishments and served the traditional way. The Chettinad-styled venison isn't served in silverware; it comes in a claypot, while the spicy goat curry is neatly presented in a box made of banana leaf. "The food is made and served the way it should be," says Kumar. His favourite ingredient—the curry leaf—finds its way into the food and even the cocktails.

Semma's ethos matches the philosophy of its parent company Unapologetic Foods. "We haven't viewed our cuisine as being worthy of recognition. We don't value food that comes from regions that aren't economically thriving. But we should take ownership of who we are and be proud of it," says Mazumdar.

FOOD FAVES

Roni Mazumdar

Favourite Ingredient
Poppy Seeds
Favourite dish at Semma
Attu Kari Sukka (Dry Lamb)
Comfort Food
Ground Poppy Seed Fritters with hot rice, green chili, ghee.

Vijay Kumar

Favourite Ingredient
Curry leaves
Favourite dish at Semma
Attu Kari Sukka and Goat Biryani
Comfort Food
Rice and sambar

FEASTING ON TRADTION
Clockwise from top: Chef Vijay Kumar; Chettinad Maan curry–Venision; Kudal Varuval–Goat intestines; Valiya Chemmeen Moilee–Lobster tail

Roots and Shoots

A second-generation immigrant (how is he second generation if he moved only in 1996) who moved to the US with his family in 1996, Mazumdar started his first restaurant in 2011 and teamed up with chef Chintan Pandya and later chef Vijay Kumar to bring food from lesser-known regions and communities of India to the fine-dine plate. For long, Indian food, he says was part Mughlai and part Punjabi. He confesses that until a few years ago, he would not have "dared" to serve Hilsa or other delicacies from his hometown Kolkata to friends in the US.

Clearly, the culinary-scape is an evolving one, where a Semma can win hearts and charm the palates of reviewers of the Michelin star guide. The changing preferences of modern diners reflect both the demand and corresponding supply. Apart from that, "people want to know the person behind the food; the origin of the food, the hands that cultivated or harvested it and even the soil a certain tomato was grown in. Food is a great conversation starter," says Mazumdar. And that's exactly what Semma has done.

The honesty of flavours, ingredients and cooking tradition has put Semma above the rest. Kumar's childhood memories, rather than his training at a culinary institute, a cruise liner and Michelin-starred restaurants, have shaped the thought, philosophy and food at Semma. He grew up around paddy fields where his family cultivated ponni rice, which he uses extensively in his restaurant. In a place where the nearest village was two kilometres away and electricity was in short supply, recreational activities included handpicking snails for a meal or hunting. His grandmother often cooked in a clay pot, a tradition he has tried to replicate at this swanky restaurant.

True to tradition, the menu often encourages diners to put down their forks and eat with their fingers, relishing flavours in a more wholesome manner. The crab dish is a fine example. Mazumdar says, "you have to eat with your hands and then lick the sauce off your fingers. It reminds me of childhood when the kids scrambled to get the meatiest part or the biggest claw."

The evolving approach of people towards food is part of Semma's success story. "The new generations of guests aren't fooled by molecular gastronomy. They want to pierce your soul; they want to be transported. They are open and bold and are excited to try something new," explains Mazumdar.

The success, say the men behind the brand, is a turning point for the world of regional Indian food in the US and also bestows a certain responsibility on them. "It is humbling and we hope that this will inspire an entire generation of chefs to cook Indian food. Until now, chefs have shied away from Indian cuisine because it wasn't considered valuable," says Kumar. Mazumdar is confident that Semma's recognition will be a "turning point" in the universe of Indian food. "A restaurant isn't about a shiny chandelier; it's about the food. Our biggest investment is in the food," he says.

From an award-winning Indian restaurant that once served chocolate samosas to Semma's limited rustic menu making it to the Michelin guide in 2022, it is evident that the evolving palates of consumers are picking flavours over flamboyance.
Where Greenwich Avenue, New York, NY, USA
Cost US$ 120 (Meal for two) plus taxes with no alcohol

Wine-ing Move

From whiskies to agave spirits, brandies, and even coffee, why ageing in wine barrels is trending.

By **GAGAN SHARMA**

WINTER STORM
ICEWINE CASK FINISH
21
Glenfiddich
SINGLE MALT SCOTCH WHISKY
ΑΠΟ ΤΟ 1888
METAXA
THE ORIGINAL GREEK SPIRIT
12 STARS
S. Metaxa

INDRI
SINGLE MALT
INDIAN WHISKY

SIMPLY ACES
Glenfiddich's Winter Storm changed whisky drinking; Metaxa fits no bill and is unprecedented; Indri is sheer indulgence (Left)

Would it be fair to say that wine is the most remarkable elixir of the Alco-bev world? It may provoke comment, but one fact will go uncontested; that it has inspired, pushed and nudged other spirits to be better, added oomph and character to them. In a time where every drink is trying to reimagine, think out-of-the-box, reinvent, and offer the unprecedented to awe and delight patrons, ageing in wine barrels is the most relevant move. Surprisingly, this is spilling over from whiskies to agave spirits, brandies, to even coffee now.

Why wines? Well, nature designed it as such; it is the only all-natural elixir. Also, it grows on its own, even in the most unforgiving terrains. And once the fruit ripens, it ferments to create alcohol by itself, soliciting no human intervention. Pairing food with wine wasn't a luxury; it was the only way to survive—eat and quaff it down with wine. No wonder the ancients submitted to the higher wisdom of ***In vino veritas***—in wine, there is truth and also inspiration, apparently.

NOT IMMERSING, JUST RESTING

As far as whiskies are concerned, cask finishing has always been around, and now it's the flag bearer of the rapidly changing whisky scene. Remember whenever you read labels like Sherry, PX, Maderia casks, Port Pipes, and the like, you're picking up a wine cask finish. Cask-finishing is essentially moving a fully matured whisky in a used cask (that once held another alcoholic beverage) for a few months before its release. It allows the spirit to pick up nuances that it couldn't have developed on its own. It also gives distillers the opportunity to play with their output whilst retaining the distillery's signature style.

Paul John, India's most awarded single malt distillers do a fabulous job at this with their famed PX and Oloroso variants. They age their whiskies for over three years, and finish it for a period longer than usual for more robust results. Michael Dsouza, master distiller, believes that the additional character that wine casks add is a ready solution to the depleting interest in age-statement whiskies of 18-21-25 years. "Consumers demand whiskies that can be relished sooner, yet have a different twang. Whisky distillers' goals are also shifting towards creating something different. Since a lot of whisky giants also own wineries, this cross exposure comes naturally". And with that comes premiumisation. Drinkers across the globe are paying more for these cask-finished whiskies, even deeming them collectibles.

SWEET TALKING

Adding a sweet affectation to a whisky, long considered a man's drink, is also helping make it gender neutral. Glenmorangie's Nectar d'Or is aged in Sauternes casks, the coveted, delectable, dessert wine from France. Glenfiddich, often known to push the envelope, produced a limited release Winter Storm that was aged in the legendary winery, Pellar Estate's iconic ice wine casks. Set to disrupt the scene, their precious 21-year-old single malt met with the elegant, suave, and delish Canadian icewine. "The aim wasn't to make a sweet whisky, but to excite the scene, do the unthinkable", adds Angad Gandhi, Glenfiddich's Brand Ambassador in India. "Currently more than half the whisky makers are toying with wine casks in one form or the other. Characteristics delivered by a wine cask are unparalleled. It won't be incorrect to assume that wine casks are the way forward. For instance, Winter Storm was sold out not in days or months, but a matter of hours. It's a very clear indication of the consumers' readiness", he adds.

AN EVOLVING CULTURE

Alcohol has always provoked socio-cultural change. Traditionally, après dinner drinks never really took off in India since we usually drink before our meals, seldom with, and definitely none afterwards. That probably accounts for why brandies and dessert wines have enjoyed limited success in the country. However, an iconic 130+ year old Greek label is altering that one drink at a time. Metaxa puts together an aged Greek brandy with a local sticky Muscat dessert wine, along with some herbs and rose petals to create a proposition that fits into no set boxes. What was once a medicinal endeavour is now changing the way generations drink and when. Although this has been popular abroad over a dozen decades or so, India has been slow to the party, and is only befriending the trend now. "The sweetness and balanced acidity of the Muscat wine gives Metaxa a smooth and fruity taste without making it overly sweet, and when combined with fine wine distillates and herb extracts, it creates a unique organoleptic experience", explains Constantinos Raptis, Metaxa Master.

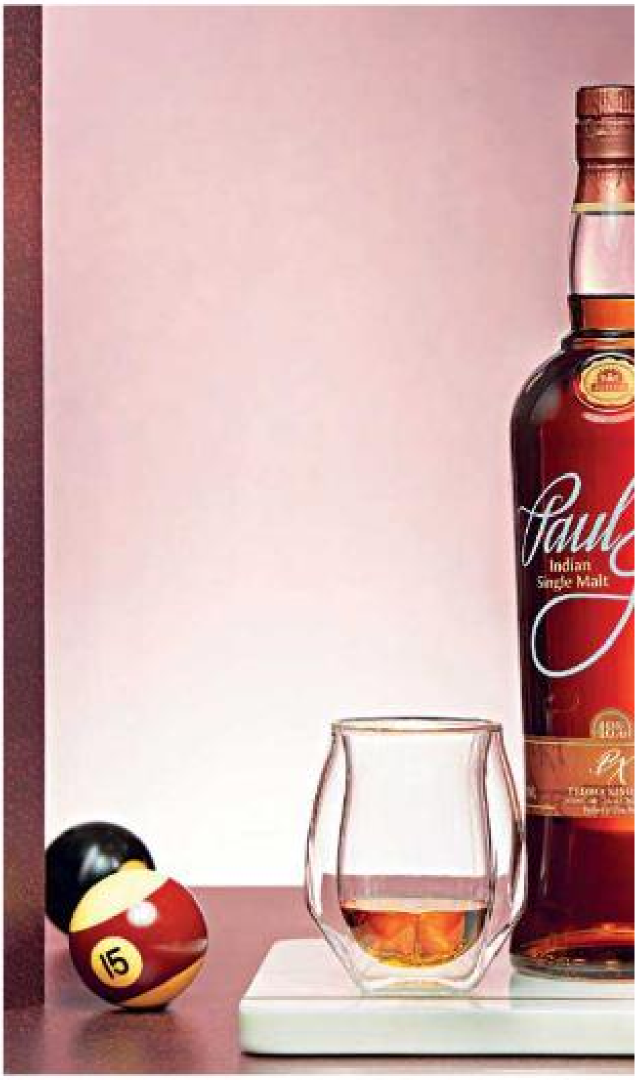
INDIAN WINES FOR INDIAN PRODUCE

India's romance with Tequilas has been a long-standing one. Now Rakshay Dhariwal is single-handedly putting India on the world map by making converts of agave drinkers. Pistola Agavepura too couldn't stay away from the trend. KRSMA Wines, sole winemakers in the UNESCO World Heritage Site tagged Hampi Hills, produce commendable, cult-worthy Cabernet Sauvignon. Dhariwal scored a few barrels from their cellars and aged his nectar in it for two months to create the pink-hued Rosa and Rosa Select, the latter being an exquisite single-barrel rendition.

Borrowing a page or two from the playbooks of rum and other spirits, agave-crafters have been looking to wine for inspiration. Calirosa has been a leader, ageing their distillates in Californian barrels; El Mayor ages their Reposado in ex-Chardonnay French casks; Cava de Oro tops at it with their Extra Anejo aged in French red wine casks for seven years! "We put our distillate in their French oak, 225 litre, ex-Cabernet casks and the product was a stunner. We might try the same with ex-Sherry casks now," confesses Dhariwal. "Wine is vast, well-accepted, and a premium beverage, and agave naturally does really well with them. It gets little tannic, fruity, attains depth, broadens the spectrum, and the hue is amazing. Most importantly, it adds a level of spice, vegetal, and red fruit notes which not only work well with agave, but it's something no other barrel can deliver."

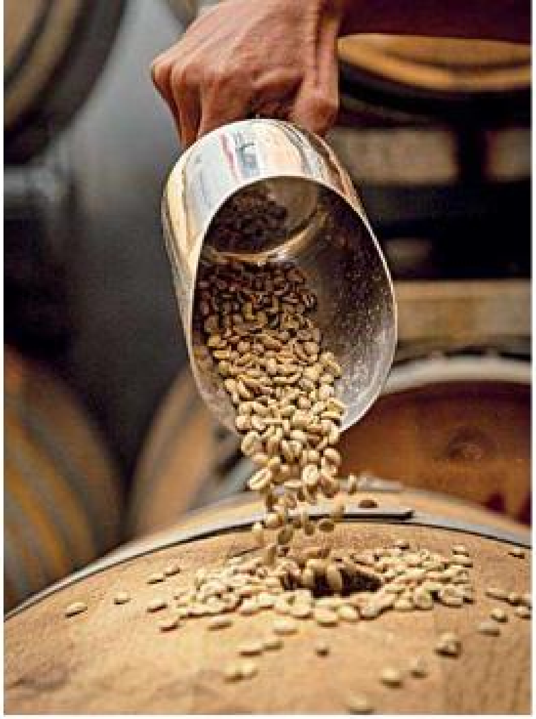
INDIAN WHISKIES WITH A GLOBAL TONE

Red wine barrels have also reserved their space at distilleries. The burgeoning market for



John
Whisky

PISTOLA
ROSA



REVEL
Paul John's PX cask is a grastronome's delight; Pistola Rosa brings a twang of KRSMA's cult Cabernet Sauvignon; Sula meets Blue Tokai to fulfil Robert Mondavi's prophecy (Below)

Indian single malts are now going past cask finishing. For instance, Indri Single Malt rests their distillates in ex-Bordeaux casks for the better part of a decade. "Through this, Indri offers something different. The dark and red fruit tones, hints of pepper, and honeyed sweetness lends a unique profile and texture to the liquid", explains Prabhkaran Hundal, GM Sales & Marketing at the brand. Whiskies are a quirky proposition in India where consumers are annoyingly brand loyal and seldom venture beyond familiar labels. However, there's been an interesting change over the past years: "Consumers now do understand and appreciate the use of different barrels and what uniqueness it lends to the liquid, to a certain extent. But this patronage is limited to the few who are well travelled and have learned to experiment", adds Hundal.

For instance, as a sommelier, I can imagine the value that a Tempranillo's Crianza can add to a rather astute whisky, bringing in a nerve of refreshing citrus, breaking the monotony of overt concentration from years of ageing, a burst of ripe red fruits, and a cola playfulness. All this from simply letting the two marry for a couple of months. This exchange hasn't been one way, wines are being also being aged in whisky barrels now. Jacob's Creek's Double Barrel Shiraz, Agitator's Bourbon Barrel Cabernet Sauvignon are just a few glorious examples.

SPREADING THE JOY

Sula Vineyards have enjoyed an interesting tryst with Paul & Mike chocolate and then with Blue Tokai coffee roasters to create some sober pursuits as well. The barrels in which they rest their best produce—Rasa Shiraz, Rasa Zinfandel and Dindori Shiraz—were put to good use. Once the wine was racked out, they were filled with 100 kilos of beans and xinterim. These were then roasted and shipped out as a limited release batch. The legendary winemaker Robert Mondavi reportedly believed morning coffee needed cream, sugar, and a generous splash of red wine. Sula and Blue Tokai have made it happen for their domestic audience. "The tannic grip, spicy lift, and an undeniable burst of red fruits made the coffee simply un-putdownable", says Gregoire Verdin, Brand Ambassador, Sula Vineyards. And now we hear more roasters are being added to the lineup.

For the most civilised drink that's helped forge our civilisation, there's a lot more that wines can still contribute. Like the Avengers, it's only adding more to its brigade, empowering them further, and keeping patrons enticed, and excited for the next one. Much like other drinks need wines to up their offerings, wine needs them to break their monotony as well. And in this happy marriage, we the drinkers are the biggest gainers.

PERU BEYOND COMMON PARLANCE

Staving off clichés, Spice explores Peru's exotic appeal beyond the legendary Incas and the lofty Machu Picchu.

By **KARISHMA KIRPALANI**

Hiding between the pages of Geography books, peering out from relief maps and sprawling across globes, the continent of South America seems like a different world all together with Peru as its 'exotic' touchpoint. The Andean preserve has always held explorers and travellers in its thrall, especially Machu Picchu, the lost city of the Incas in Peru. Undoubtedly, it is the experience of a lifetime that truly deserves to be among the Seven Wonders of the World. However once you visit Peru, the entire country seems a 'Wonder of the World'. Here's a country that effortlessly swallows up the schism of tradition and modernity to present a perfect blend of East meets West. Mystic landscapes, mythic stories and quirky traditions punctuate a narrative that is history's favourite love child. Here's how to experience luxury the Peruvian way.

BELMOND ANDEAN EXPLORER

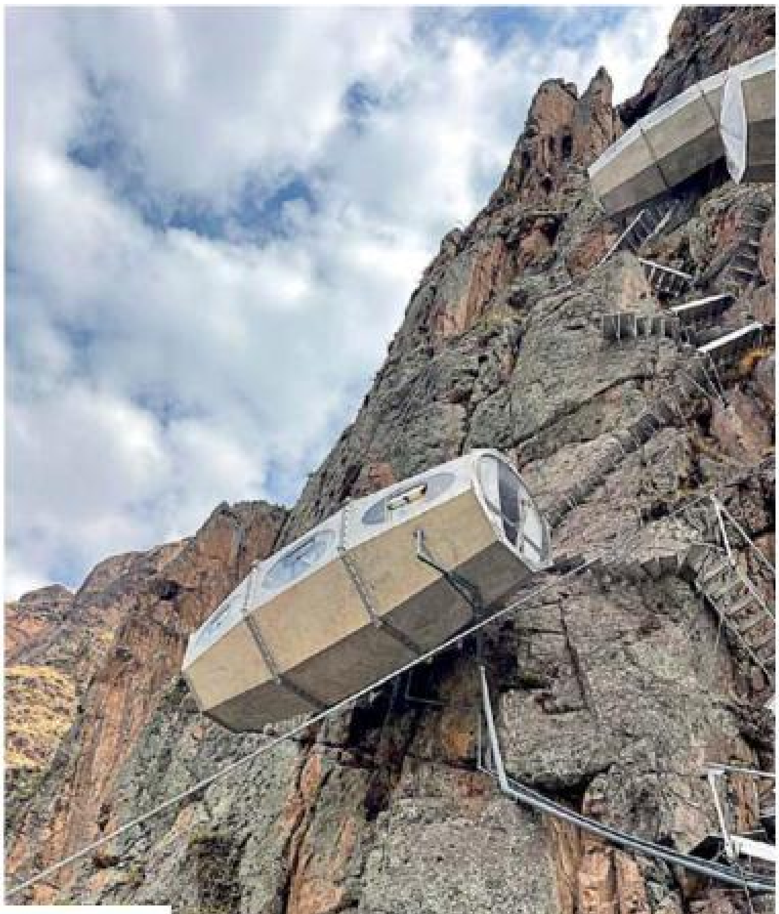
To travel on a train is to romance nostalgia; enjoy an unhurried pace where savouring the journey overwhelms the anxiety of being destination-bound. Trawling through the exquisite landscape of the Andes, the Belmond Andean Explorer is the most sophisticated way to travel from Arequipa to Cusco. This once-in-a-lifetime experience, begins with a welcome glass of the finest champagne, quaffed down to the musical symphony of chattering gold bubbles in your glass flute and the live pianist, who is part of the welcome brigade. The train staff then escorts you to your cabins, which are compact but comfortable and laid out with the finest bed linen. Most rooms have twin beds. In order to save space, the Belmond gives you their own leather bag where you can keep what you need for the next two days, while the balance luggage is kept in storage. The bathroom is well-appointed and makes great use of constrained space, yet does not economise when it comes to the vanities—offering the most exclusive. Every meal is carefully curated to outline the unique taste of each region of the country. The chef factors in every vegetable, fruit, poultry and seafood available in the Andean region to prepare Michelin-worthy fare. If you're a Pisco lover there is every variety here on offer, prune, passion fruit, apple, chicha (local black corn), among many others. Shared companionships apart, the magical views and phenomenal sunsets are the stuff of Insta-dreams, and best enjoyed from the open carriage at the end of the train. A knowledgeable guide, talented chef, trained masseur, expert pianist, and amenable support staff, stunning Peruvian cuisine, breathtaking views, and fiery sunsets make this journey more than a memento for your memoirs.

Cost USD 4,000 (all inclusive for the 2 day journey for 2 people)

Reservations https://www.belmond.com/trains/south-america/peru/belmond-andean-explorer/

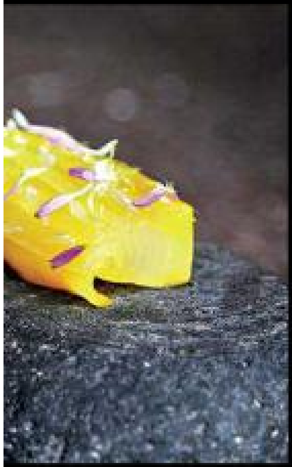
STAR LODGE

True to its name, this celestial crib is your best bet to hang with the stars. This luxury pad is a glass cabin that is cantilevered over the mountain, within close proximity to a million stars in the inky black sky. To reach this glass capsule, an adventurous spirit is your guide and companion. Get acquainted with your hiking boots, helmet, harness gear and begin your ascent to 10,000 feet above sea level. The trek lasts about 30 minutes, as you negotiate the tricky distance amid rocks and the majestic mountains. Spend the evening star gazing as you lounge in the hot tub, suspended above the mountains and the Urubambu river in the Sacred Valley. Star Lodge has a sister property called Sky Lodge where you can climb via farrata (mountain climbing supported with ladders, ropes and bridges) and then zip down the sacred valley to supercharge your adrenaline. Star Lodge, on the other hand, hits that sweet spot between adventure and luxury.



Cost US$ 500 per person (includes stay, activities, dinner & breakfast and transfers to and from Cusco)

Reservations https://naturavive.com/web/starlodge-adventure-suites/



FINE DINING AT MAYTA

Tantalise your tastebuds as Cordon Bleu Chef, Jamie Pesaque takes you on a journey through the diverse landscape of Peru. The menu at Mayta has been carefully curated to make a guest experience flavours from the gigantic Andes to the Amazon forest, the Urubambu river to the fertile fields of the Sacred valley and the desert of Huacacina. The puree made from the Chocolo corn (big kernels) grown in the Sacred valley pleases the palate, while the gooseberry from the Amazon, refreshes and recharges the senses; the sweet potatoes grown in the Andes are unique and lend a special flavour to the mash that is a key ingredient in desserts. At Mayta, rated among the Top 50 restaurants in the world, set yourself on a three-hour journey through the adventures of diverse and magnificent Peru. All of Peru comes alive on Mayta's menu; here tradition and taste cohabit on the plate.

Cost US$ 150 (12-course meal)
Location Miraflores, Lima
Reservation https://www.maytalima.com/en/

FLY OVER THE NAZCA LINES

The moment you plan a trip to Peru and start searching for itineraries, viewing the Nazca lines sits proudly atop the list of must-dos. These Geoglyphs are made on the soil of the Nazca Desert and are considered magical and mysterious (they've been there for over 1000 years, and have never been erased, since it has never rained). These lines are spread across an expanse of 1,000 kilometres, covering 300 figures including geometric shapes and animals. To capture a bird's eye view, take a helicopter ride; nothing adds better perspective than altitude. Interestingly, taking the chopper, almost feels like an International flight as there's a check-in, passport control and security check. The ride lasts approximately 45-50 minutes and is quite turbulent, so make sure you don't eat a heavy meal before the flight. Legend has it; these lines were made by the Nazcas as an offering to God as they prayed for food and rain. Some of the most iconic figures etched in memory are the astronaut, the spider and monkey with an approximate average size of around 200 feet.

Cost US$ 200 (per person inclusive tax)
Getting there Six-hour drive from Lima: Arrive the evening before and check in to a nearby hotel near the Nazca Aerporto. Flights usually take off in the early hours of the morning.
Expert tip: Book a tour on Viator, since many tour companies are operating this service

OB1655
www.AlasPeruanas.com

COLCA LODGE

If a tourist plans to visit the Cross of Condor, famous for the Condor bird native to Peru, the Colca Lodge is the perfect perch. Spend the night at this property that settles smack in the midst of the valley and the Colca Canyon. This is your spatial transport to a vibe where you can seamlessly connect the dots that heal both body and soul. The three thermal bath springs, are a sure thing when it comes to a complete relaxing massage, using the power of the minerals from the volcano in the region. Spend a day enjoying some piscos or a glass of wine in the water, enveloped by gorgeous views that you couldn't imagine existed. The lap-of-nature dwellings translate to comfortable wood cabins, that have no connectivity; unwind or unravel, this peaceful property is the perfect place to befriend the gentle alpacas and llamas. Truly experience oneness with the environment.

Cost USD220 per night along with food
Getting there A 3.5 hour drive from Arequipa
Reservations https://colca-lodge.com/en/spa/

TANGO OF TASTE

Macallan collaborates with Whisky Samba for its first ever limited-edition pairing menu in the country

By **CHUMKI BHARADWAJ**

PAIRED TO PLEASE
Avocado tartare served with truffle cheese and baked beets on sago pearls poppers (Below)

Whisky Samba is the kind of place that holds a democratic appeal: You can retire to a relatively quiet corner, nursing your favourite poison as you unwind to the 90s music that plays in the early hours. Or you can choose to arrive closer to the witching hour, where a large part of the cavernous space becomes hostage to techno on the turntable with a dance floor in the forecourt. Either way, the food and drink are worthy companions. While it's easy to understand why this restaurant & bar is one of the most sought-after in Delhi-NCR, wrapping your head around the logic of a place like this serving up a curated five-course pairing menu is a tad tougher. Macallan is a whisky that inspires a certain laid-back self indulgence, for which a frenetic bar space seems incongruous, especially when paired with a multi-course menu. But both whisky enthusiasts and gourmands can rest assured since the bespoke menu accentuates the blissful union of classic Macallan style and the unmistakable sweetness of sherry-seasoned American oak in which the whisky is matured.

Word to the wise: book a table for early evening so that you have the languor of time and mindspace to enjoy the 200-year-old craft that makes the whisky what it is. Notably, the chefs at Whisky Samba have done a valiant job of not just keeping abreast but proving to be a noteworthy nudge to the art of craft. Both the Norwegian Salmon ceviche served with a side of hiyashe wakame, avocado tartare served with truffle cheese and baked beets, organic broccoli marinated with kasundi mustard superbly hold the imagination and the palate captive. The innovative sea bass with quinoa, served with the traditional Goan poi bread and a moilee sauce were perfect to evoke the smoky notes of The Macallan. The final flourish involved a decadent Dark Chocolate Cremeux with hazelnut micro-sponge, berry crumble and a luscious toffee sauce that underscored the sweeter notes of the single malt. All in all, a sumptuous feast by all measures, although, the whisky poured could have been dealt with a more generous hand to match the generosity of flavours locked in the bottle.

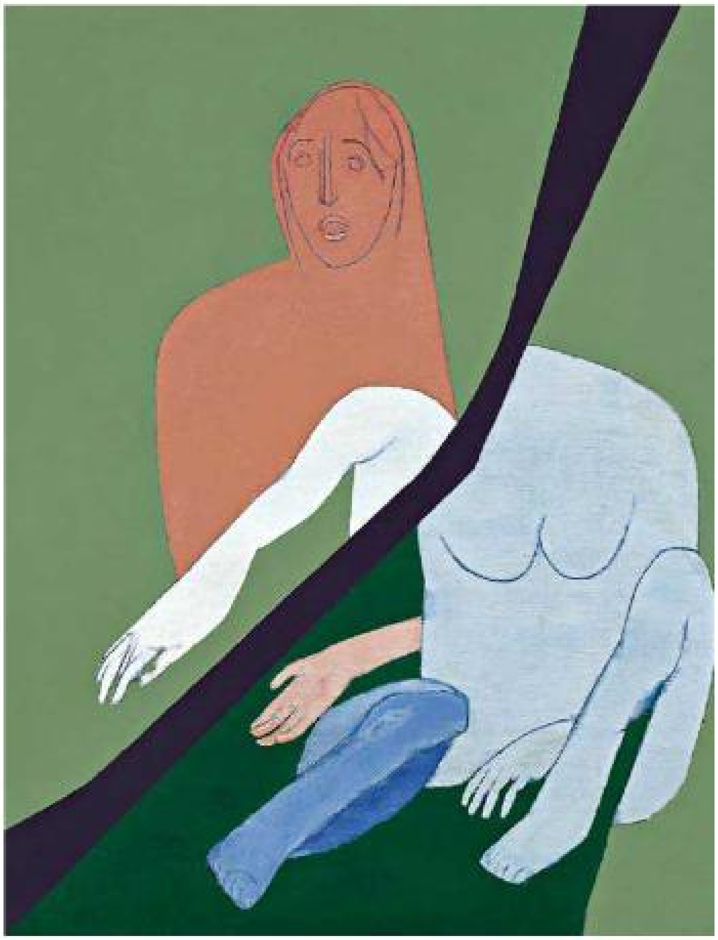
Where Whisky Samba, Two Horizon Center, DLF Phase 5, Sector 43, Gurugram

Cost ₹7,500* (per person); the limited-edition pairing menu will be available till January 4, 2023

Reviving Old Glory

How to restore and conserve artworks that are best suited for Indian weather

By **AISHWARYA CHANDURKAR**
Restoration and Conservation Expert



Like with all things beautiful, time plays devouring tyrant even when it comes to art, whether it is a painting, sculpture, or even a photograph, longevity takes its inevitable toll and requires conservation to maintain its appearance and quality.

Conservation uses interdisciplinary historical methods and scientific analyses to archive and conserve artefacts. When it comes to the Indian climate, one has to bear several aspects in mind because of contrasting weather extremes.

For instance, heat can lead to thermal tension, moisture reduction, and even chemical alteration within the paint layer and the support, sometimes even irreversibly. This can lead to wrinkles, warping, weakening, and breaking off the paper/cloth fibres. Additionally, it can damage the paint layer by resulting in cracks, losses, and in severe cases, paint bubbling or blistering.

Sun Damage

When an artwork is continually exposed to direct sunlight, the colours and details of the artwork can fade, and the varnish can begin to discolour with time. If exposed to UV rays for an extended period, some paints may begin to chalk, while binders and varnishes may embrittle and crack. Severe direct sunlight damage can be irreversible. If an owner of an artwork notices that their piece is exposed to direct sunlight, it is advisable to either change the location of the painting or safeguard it with UV-protective glass/ acrylic.

Mould growth and fungal activity are other issues that affect artwork, especially in cities with high humidity, especially during the monsoon. Humidity and dampness could also damage the paint layer and cause expanding and contracting

Photos: ASTAGURU AUCTION HOUSE

of the support frames. This would cause the paint and the support to crack, delaminate, warp, and ripple. For paintings on wooden panels, the cracking and warping can be much worse and the damage can sometimes be irreversible.

If you notice fungal activity on the surface of paint, consult a professional conservator for treatment. Mould and fungus can leave behind unsightly stains that, in certain cases, are difficult to rectify. Regularly monitor your artworks to identify an issue in its initial stage.

If you do live in humid conditions, ensure that a painting indoors doesn't get affected though controlling the humidity. It helps to display them in areas that are well lit with ample air circulation and R.H levels that range between 40-60 per cent. When it comes to cities such as Mumbai or Chennai with very high levels of humidity, install a dehumidifier.

It has also been observed that metal sculptures close to the sea often develop rust and salt deposits. Chemical alterations leading to corrosion is one of the most common side effects. In similar situations, consult a professional conservator and avoid DIY solutions to clean.

TIPS & TRICKS

It is not advisable to attempt to restore a painting at home, and one must consult a restoration expert for the same. However, one can monitor them at home. Here are ways to take care of your artwork. Here is some handy advice to help take care of your artwork at home.

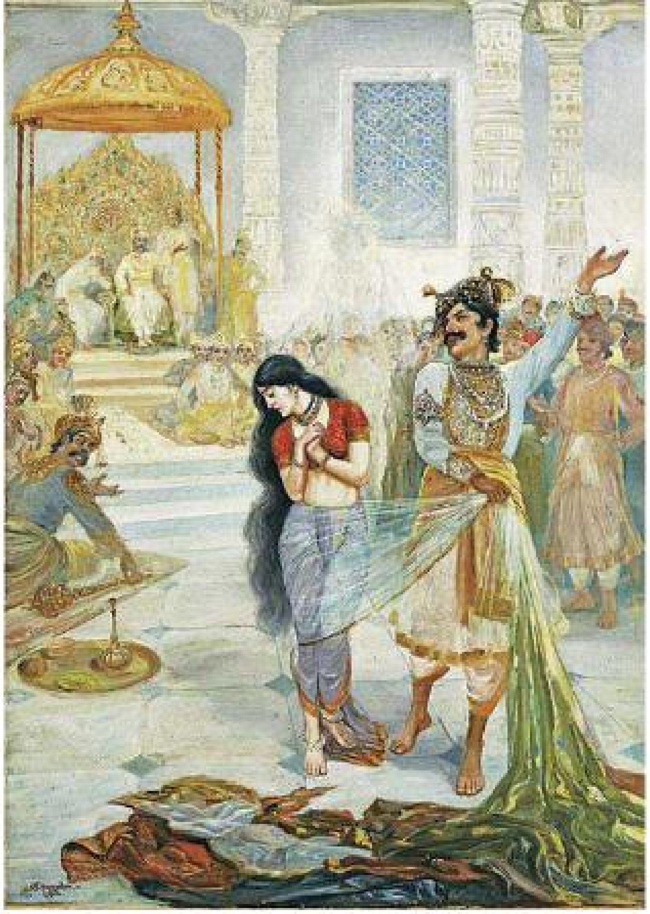
Wear gloves while handling artwork Wear a fresh pair of thin gloves when handling paintings. Even though your hands may appear clean, oils from your skin may migrate to your artwork, staining canvases and damaging them.

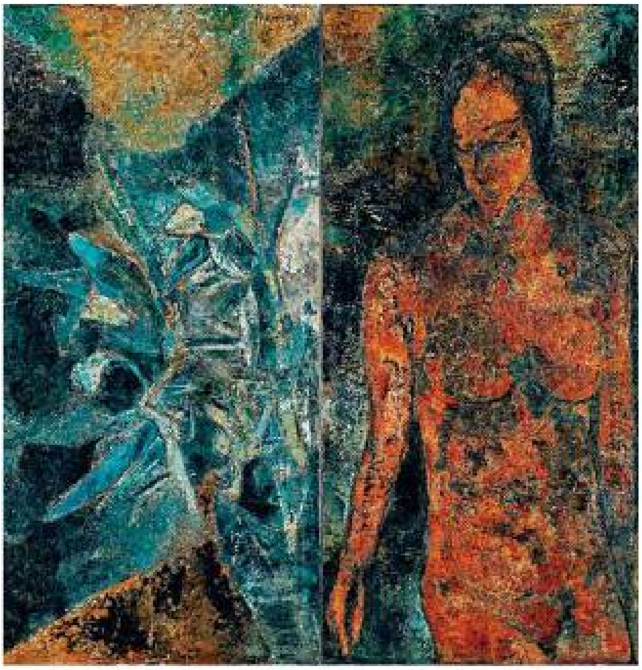
Cleaning The Artwork Dry brush the artwork with a light hand for dust accumulation. Be careful not to crack dried paint while handling paintings with heavy impasto. In crevasses, you might wish to gently work with Q-tips. Make sure that works on paper are stored away from humid areas.

Storage Nearly everything loses colour when exposed to strong sunshine, including your newest piece . A place where your art will frequently receive direct sunlight is not a good place to hang it.

Framing If you don't want the sun to adversely affect your artwork, use a UV-filtering acrylic frame rather than a glass frame.

Check For Dampness The most sensitive art forms to moisture are probably those on paper. The first signs of wetness on canvases will be visible on the back of the painting. Due to the environment, discolouration with characteristic brown stains may occur. As advised, have your artwork professionally cleaned or restored to extend its life.





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HOMING IN
Clockwise from Top left: Diagonal by Tyeb Mehta, 1973, Oil on canvas; Untitled by M.V. Dhurandhar, 1922, Oil on canvas, 1922, Paysage Aux Fleurs & Nu (Diptych) by Akbar Padamsee, 1965, Oil on canvas; Restoation work afoot

On the Waterfront

St. Regis Hotels & Resorts have set up their first resort property in Goa–the hype and hope that accompany its launch in the sunshine state.

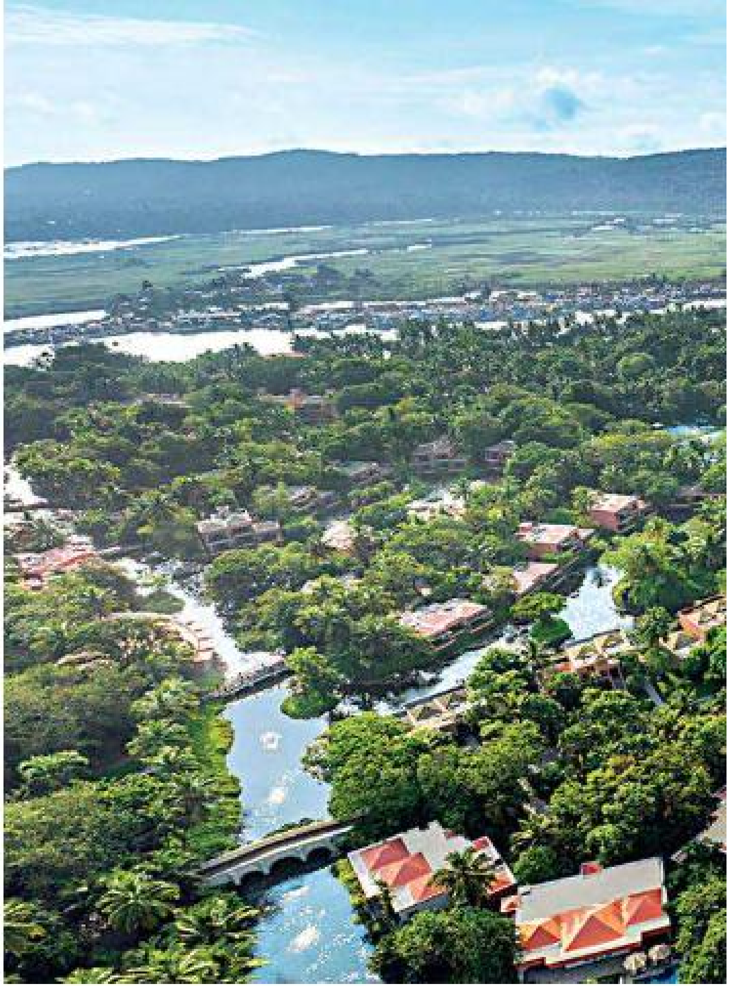
By **CHUMKI BHARADWAJ**

*

SLICE OF ITALY
Riverside is the italian fine-dine restaurant of the resort that nestles restfully on the water's edge. Apart from the artfully curated and executed menu, the location, that comes with a live saxophonist is sublime

Celebration is an essential ritual of the Goan susegad; it's what draws the jaded to its champagne sands and tequila sunrises. This spirit of state-sponsored bonhomie aside, it is crafting joyful experiences that almost make merrymaking a custom, that sets The St. Regis Goa Resort apart. The sunset ritual of Champagne sabrage, performed all over the resort chain's hotels internationally, is a notable example. The sand brigade gathers around the beach-shack-vibe bar, Susegado, as the sun prepares its nightly dunk in the Arabian Sea. Amid glowing lanterns and the noisy breakers making landfall, the liveried gent gracefully sabres the champagne much to the delight of those in attendance. Nothing draws crowds like ceremonial splendour. And that is something St. Regis gets down pat.

Resettling into the sands of the iconic Leela Resort Goa is no mean feat; after all the property had been around for over three decades. But The St. Regis Goa Resort seems determined to bring to Goa the internationally renowned hallmarks of this iconic luxury brand. The bespoke St. Regis butler service is a worthy mention. Since almost 80 per cent of the erstwhile Leela staff has been retained, it's a joyous union of the old and new guard that makes this

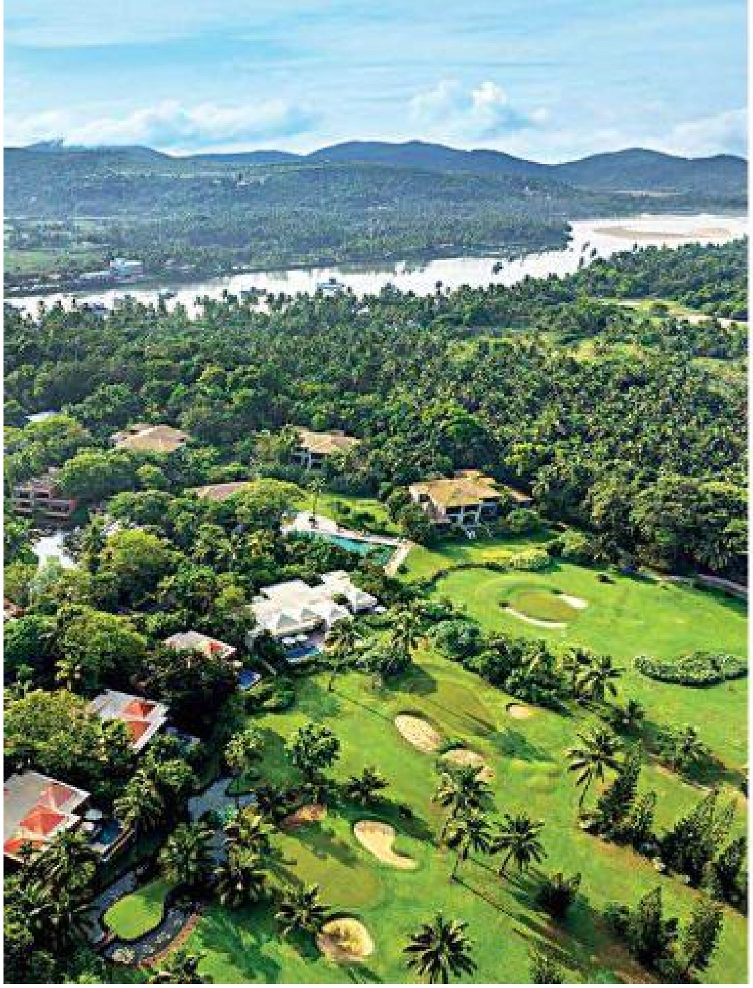


property so delightful. Regulars to this property will find an easy transition as St. Regis makes its presence felt in small but meaningful ways. For now, it's only the lobby and reception areas that have seen a complete design makeover, but plans are afoot to reconfigure, reimagine and restructure much more. As with every new property, there are a few warts and knobbly corners as the new hotel gradually finds its feet (it's just a little over two months since it opened).

The property is a curated sanctuary that is sandwiched between the Sal River and the Arabian Sea; delightful freshwater lagoons languorously meander through the property offering unhindered views of blooming lotuses, wild geese and migrating birds. With 30,000 trees on the 49-acre property, finding quiet spots to picnic or simply hammock are aplenty. A confluence of Portuguese and traditional Indian architecture outlines the design edit for the 206 guestrooms, which include 46 suites offering private terraces overlooking the tranquil lagoons or the golf course. If it's bespoke luxury you crave, the property also offers 20 luxuriously appointed suites and villas with plunge pools, private access to the beach, and of course all-day food indulgence at The Manor.

Indulgence Quotient

With four exquisite dining venues and two bars, chances are you won't need to step out of the resort if you truly care to vegetate. Grazing options at The Restaurant—an

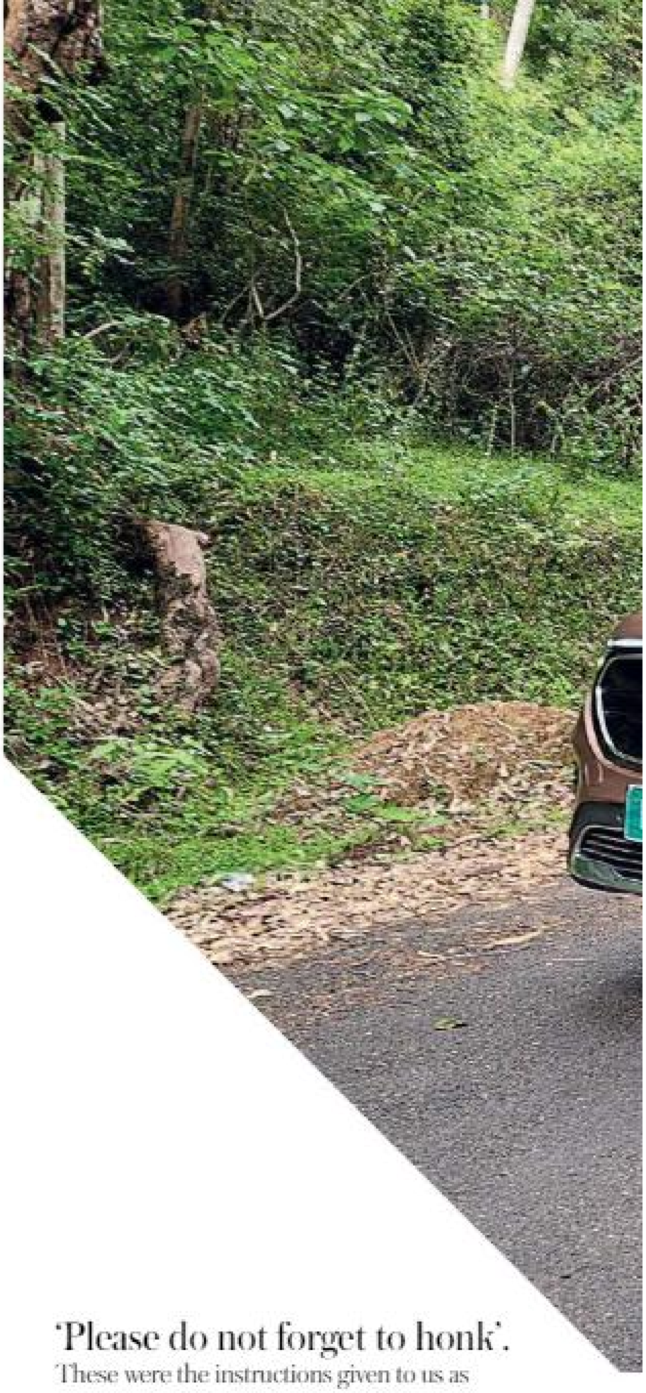


RAMP UP IN STYLE
The freshwater lagoons join all the dots at the property (Left); Spa time equals bliss with trained therapists and fabulous treatments (Below); Picnic spots are aplenty (Bottom, Opposite page bottom); Room with a view (Opposite page)

all-day dining venue—offers local delights and international favorites. Food is good but service is superlative. And that is the key to this property's—in fact any hospitality offering's—primary charm. For outstanding food and ambience, head to the eastern end of the resort, Riverside, an Italian fine-dine restaurant with incredible views of the Sal River. This is Italian on steroids: Chef Vetri Selvan's sensational confections make a slice of Italy, equal a slice of life. The classic caprese salad with fresh mozzarella is a great start, moving on to the Tiger prawns served with sun blushed tomatoes and garlic bread is heaven sent. Leave space for the Fettuccine Di Mare, which is a masterful combination of pasta, squid, scallops and prawns in a sauce that is imbued with flavour in every mouthful. For dessert, the tiramisu with a homemade chantilly is perfect but for sheer delight, the citrus panna cotta.

Drinking is par for the course in Goa, of course, but make sure you dedicate one sunset to the wiles and magic of barman extraordinaire, Pradyumna, at The Drawing Room. His lively, original, colourful, flavoursome, totally sumptuous cocktails breathe life into the romance of slow living with each cocktail crafted as a sonnet to Goan-style joie de vivre . This is where St. Regis will ultimately stand among the litany of luxury hotels on this spit of land—an oasis of dramatic flourishes combined with easy joys for that lingering after taste.

Where The St. Regis Resort, Mobor, Cavelossim, Goa
Price ₹30,000 (lagoon superior room); ₹42,500 (St. Regis Suite); ₹70,000 (Manor Pool Suite)



DRIVETRAIN DUAL-MOTORS ASM and PSM.
POWER 225 BHP and 390 Nm
BATTERY 66.5 kWh
RANGE 423 km (WLTP)
CHARGING TIME 6h 25 mins (10 - 100% 11kW)
TOP SPEED 160 kms/hr (electronically locked)
0 TO 100 KM/HR 8.0 seconds
PRICE ₹74.5 lakh (ex-showroom)

THE GAME CHANGER

The stunning 7-seater Mercedes EQB is the stuff of electric dreams.

By **DHIRAM SHAH**

'Please do not forget to honk'. These were the instructions given to us as we drove down the Mercedes EQB from Kodaikanal to Madurai. This travel advisory was not meant for hapless pedestrians or incoming traffic but for the scores of monkeys, so that they were alerted to the approach of the eerily quiet electric SUV approaching them. Just as silent, the 7-seater EQB is equally stunning and is the latest and the most affordable offering by the German car maker for the Indian market.

The EQB combines the boxy look of the GLB along with the smooth headlight and grille combination of the other EQ models. The connected tail lights give the car an overall sporty and futuristic look. Step inside, and you are greeted by a roomy and airy

cabin. While it may seem compact from the outside, the cabin is spacious, and the front two rows of seats can comfortably accommodate four adults. The third row of seats is best suited for kids or pets and can be easily folded to boost the boot space. One of the most impressive aspects of the EQB is the level of tech it offers. The dashboard has an impressive layout that combines two high-resolution 10.25 inch screens. Powered by the intuitive MBUX system, they allow you to control everything from the media, to the navigation to driving modes and much more with utmost ease. Complimenting the 64-colour ambient lightning is the chrome detailing on the AC vents, which makes the cabin quite a sight at night. Though not a Burmeister, the 12-speaker audio system packs a decent punch while delivering crisp audio.

Beauty and brains

Powering the Mercedes EQB is a dual-motor all-wheel drive powertrain and a 66.5 kWh battery that delivers an output of 225 BHP and 390 Nm. Driving the EQB is an absolute breeze, whether it's the winding roads of Kodaikanal or the straight highways of Madurai, with never a dull moment. In spite of being a 2-tonne entry-level SUV, the slightest nudge of the accelerator pedal pushes the car forward quickly. There was minimal body roll, and the ease at which I could overtake others or, should I say, any and all vehicles on the road left me grinning. Even at high speeds, the cabin is extremely silent thanks to the noise encapsulation around the electric motors and the insulation of the passenger compartment. The EQB offers four driving modes: Eco, Comfort, Sport & Individual with each of them adjusting the steering and engine response accordingly. Comfort was our default mode on the highway and mountain, but on empty stretches, the Sport mode that made the steering heavy and the engine jumpy, translating into even more fun.

With a WLTP range of 423 km the Mercedes EQB is the complete package. It's a thrill to drive, the ride quality is excellent, and the cabin is loaded with tech. The car offers seven airbags along with a host of active and passive safety features like Blind Spot Assist, Active braking, Attention assist, and more. Safety first is an imperative for any beast on the road.

North by ***North West***

With Loya, Taj Hotels, has launched a new restaurant brand with its first outpost at Taj Palace, New Delhi.

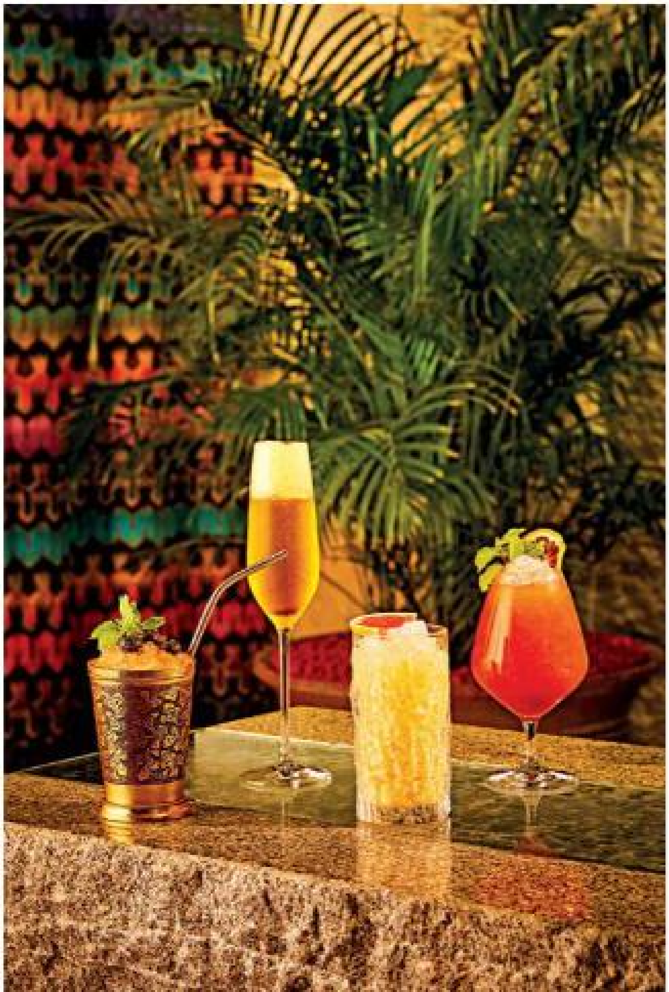
By **CHUMKI BHARADWAJ**

NORTHERN LIGHTS
Luxurious design edit (Right) coupled with authentic recipes makes the food (Below right), cocktails and desserts unforgettable (Below and Bottom right)

Crackle, sizzle, pop. That's Loya for you. The food—finest from the kitchens of the north stretching from the flavourful flatlands of Punjab to the verdant verbosity of Kashmir's variety—is simply crackling. Honouring the theatrics of traditional cooking practices such as "dhungar" or smoking, the aromatics of "baghar", in which spices are tempered in hot oil; "dum" with the richness of slow-cooking simply adds the 'sizzle' quotient. And it's the dramatic interiors and design flourishes that add the 'pop' with grand arches, exquisite niches, intricate motifs and stone jalis.

The entrance is grand and inviting, leading up to its distinctive bar courtyard that is sculpted with natural rocks and boulders and accentuated with a stunning waterfall, imagined as a nudge to the natural springs in the Himalayas. Vibrant use of colourful drapes and vivid artworks create a merry jamboree with copper lanterns and delicate filigree 'jaalis'.

Few hospitality brands have used the pandemic to reimagine, reinvent and reconfigure their offering as much as the Taj brand. From refurbishing rooms and suites to the relaunch of Machan, Emperor's Lounge and lobby, and The House of Ming, Loya is yet another joyful addition to the new and the old.



Far from being swaddled in formulaic luxury hotel mould, the restaurant is gracious and welcoming with a festive air. The food follows the same edit with comforting flavours, and authentic, long-preserved recipes. The crisp delights of the kachori chaat to the flavourful Timbri jheenga, prawns that hum with a pahadi bhang and jeera chutney, to the sigdi machhi—the spice rubbed catfish with pickled kala nimbu and kali lahsun are a storehouse of competing tastes and textures. For mains, the chakki paneer served in a spicy, tangy yogurt sauce is hearty heartland fare, while the kathal baigna bharta, is a smoking hit, contrasting well with the light and refreshing Kashmiri morel pulao with ori raita. All food is meant to be equal, but the same can't be said for the cocktails that are stunning. The names, colours, presentation and flavour combinations actually oofer them unique personalities.

The desserts are a worthy denouement to the drama of food and flavour. Sample the Badana pearls with rabri and saffron foam or the kulfi board with rose petal, royal paan leaf and saffron-cardamom kulfi. We lost our heart to the chef's own grandmother's recipe for badam kheer. Nothing nudges nostalgia like personal connections.

Where Loya—Restaurant & Bar, Taj Palace, New Delhi
Cost ₹ 6,500 (Meal for two without alcohol) plus taxes

Southern *Comfort*

Housed in a beautiful Goan bungalow, this new kid on the block, doubles up as an art gallery. On offer is contemporary south Indian food with a bar that assumes centre-stage.

By **RUPALI DEAN**

Photo Courtesy ROHIT CHAWLA

Hosa (new in Kannada) is suitably impressive to say the least. Replete with imaginative touches, it is a unity of opposites: contemporary furniture is off-set by vintage Portuguese tiles; classical art from the old masters shares space with nonchalant, unconventional and even zany art from the Indian south. Kudos to veteran architect and designer Ashley Mascarenhas, who has restored, and fortified this old Portuguese villa with designer Rohini Kapur's vision. Founder Chairman, EHV Rohit Khattar (of Indian Accent & Comorin fame) along with Chef Suresh DC have tried to create a modern version of the spectacular flavours of South India. You can easily tell that every element of this charming 100-seater restaurant has been imagined and created with loads of TLC!

HOSA
RESTAURANT & BAR
GOA

LABOUR OF LOVE
The visage of the restored old Portuguese villa that houses Hosa; Interior detailing near the bar (Below); Food platter with Gunpowder Kid Corn (v), Chicken Meat Ball Gassi, Prawn Tawa Fry, Edamame Paniyaram (v) and Vada Kari (Opposite page)

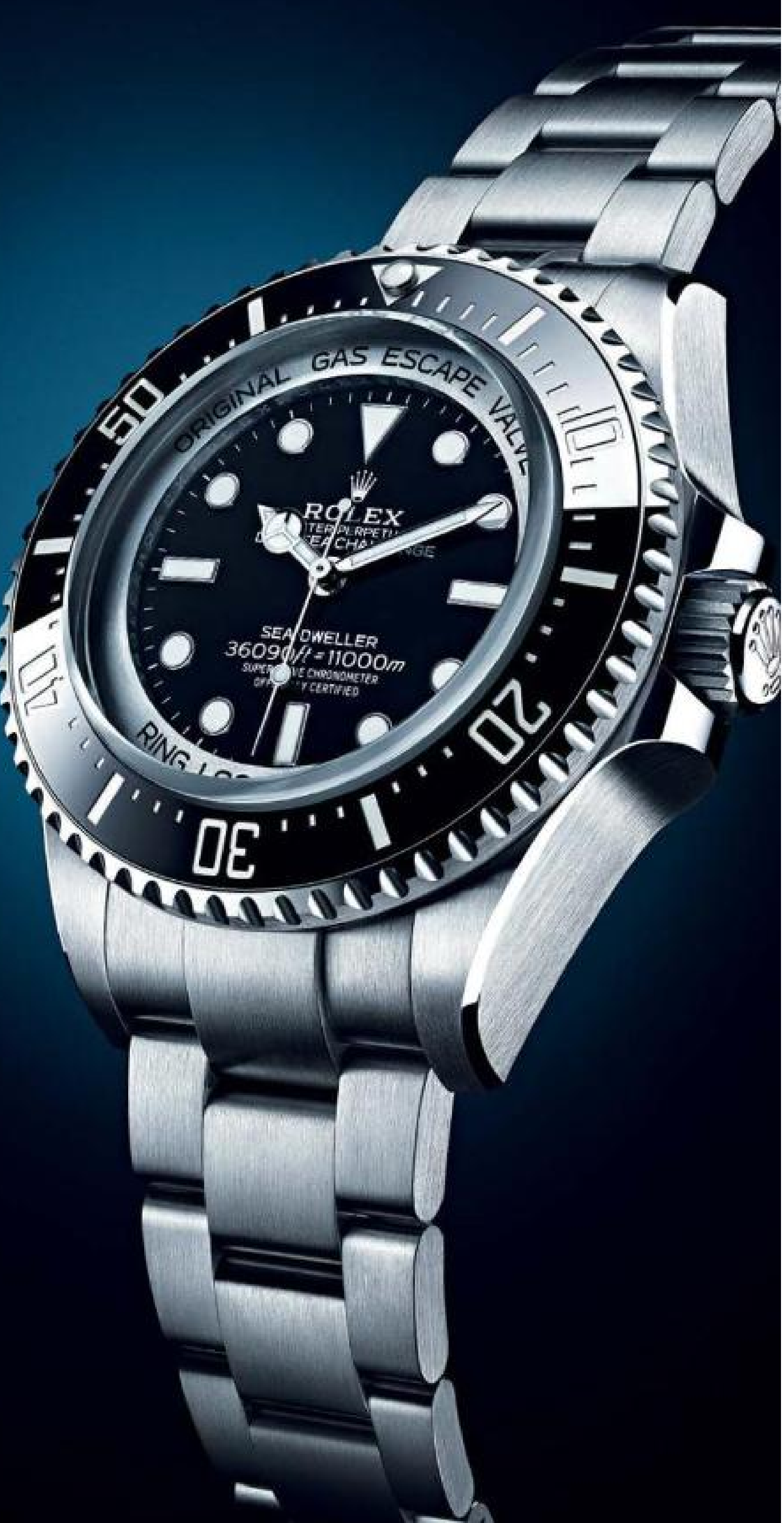
As for the food, the menu is short and crisp where every offering from small to extra-large plates are easy to navigate. The small plate you need to order is the Mutton pepper Roast, this is the stuff of legend—an absolute triumph. The meat is braised to tender perfection, sliced then fried and pressed into a tight block of intense flavour, served with shaved coconut and garlic chips. Another super hit is the Almonds 65 with a masterful smoky aroma, paired with curd rice and pomelo. When it comes to mains, the Wild Mushroom Varuval sticks in memory; I don't think I can have Pongal any other way now. Save space for some Whole Roast Pollichatu; in fact, the entire succession of dishes forges a beautiful narrative of South Indian culture. Hosa allows itself to be led by current trends, yet finds it in its heart to hold tradition close. Varun Sharma, who spearheads the beverage programme, is masterful when it comes to embellishing cocktails with a local twist, whether it's the Kokum Cola or the oh-so-decadent Rasam Mary. Hosa's cocktails are strong enough to hold their own ground, should the restaurant ever decide to go solo and start a separate or an attached bar. I for one, will take up permanent residence on their bar stools.

WHERE: HOSA Restaurant & Bar, At Irada Home, House No. 60/1, Near St. Anthony's Church, Vaddy, Siolim – Bardez, North Goa 403517.
Contact: +91 8326747212; 7498627977.
URL www.hosarestaurant.com
COST ₹3,000 ((Meal for two) plus taxes, excluding alcohol

A New Avatar

Famed Hollywood filmmaker and explorer James Cameron is no stranger to making history. But when he unveiled the Oyster Perpetual Deepsea Challenge in November, he became part of history, at least at the legendary brand, Rolex. Inspired by the experimental watch that he wore on his historic 10,908-metre (35,787-foot) descent into the Mariana Trench on March 26, 2012, the Deepsea Challenge represents a new milestone in the world of Rolex divers' watches. For starters, it is guaranteed waterproof to a depth of 11,000 metres (36,090 feet), crafted from RLX titanium, and equipped with a helium escape valve and the Ringlock system, which makes it a capable companion for divers in any environment—open-water diving, submersible dives or even in hyperbaric chambers. This watch is actually designed to turn pressure into an ally in any situation. More than a watch attribute that almost sounds like a life mantra. Designed to withstand extreme pressure, years of research were required to overcome the watchmaking and manufacturing challenges that its fabrication presented. While the experimental model from 2012 was attached to the manipulator arm of James Cameron's submersible, this one has been designed to wear on the wrist. The bracelet extension systems—Rolex Glidelock and the Fliplock extension link—allow the watch to be worn over a diving suit up to 7 mm thick. Clearly, this one aims to please, and how.

—By Chumki Bharadwaj



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